

THE

Bengwyt MS

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

THE
Benkwrt MS
OF
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY
FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



LONDON :
PUBLISHT FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY
BY N. TRÜBNER & CO., 57 & 59, LUDGATE HILL.

1868-1879.

[*The Hengwrt Collection was left by its owner to his friend Mr.
William W. E. Wynne of Peniarth, Trecyn, Merioneth.*]

First Series.

CLAY AND TAYLOR, THE CHAUCER PRESS, BUNGAY.

DEDICATED

TO

Am. Watkin Edward Wynne, Esq.,

OF PENIARTH,

BY WHOSE KIND LEAVE

THIS HENGWRT MS IS PRINTED.

Christmas, 1868.

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¹ This is the only MS. of the *Six-Text* which has the two explanatory lines 252 *b, c*, p. 8, about the Friar's renting from his monastery the 'limit' or district in which he had the sole right of begging.

² For Appendix to Group A, the spurious *Tale of Gamelyn*, see Appendix 1, p. 1*-26*, after p. 652 Heng.

³ The "modern instances"—Peter the Cruel of Spain, Peter of Cyprus, Barnabo Visconti of Milan, and Count Ugolino of Pisa—are wrongly put at the end of the Tale, p. 221—224 Heng., instead of after Zenobia, l. 3564, p. 212 Heng.

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¹ It has not the lines F 1455-6, 1493-8, known only in the Ellesmere MS.

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The Hengwrt MS. has lost its leaves after leaf 250, p. 633 *S-T*, p. 600 *Heng.* The text is thenceforward filled up from the Christ-Church MS., Oxford, to its end, p. 680 *S-T*, p. 647 *Heng.*, and thence (and from p. 665 *S-T* to p. 671) from Addit. MS. 5140, British Museum, to the end, p. 685 *S-T*, p. 652 *Heng.*

Appendix.

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¹ The Ellesmere cuts can be arrang'd either in their order in the Ellesmere MS., or in the *Six-Text* order of the Tales. In the latter they'll be easier to find.

<i>Six-Text Order.</i>	Group.	<i>Ellesmere MS. Order.</i>	Group.
1. Knight	A	1. Knight	A
2. Miller		2. Miller	
3. Reeve		3. Reeve	
4. Cook		4. Cook	
5. Man of Law	B	5. Man of Law	B
6. Shipman		6. Wife of Bath	
7. Prioress		7. Friar	
8. Chaucer		8. Sum'ner	
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16. Clerk		16. Prioress	
17. Merchant	E	17. Chaucer	B
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21. Canon's Yeoman	F	21. Canon's Yeoman	G
22. Manciple		22. Manciple	
23. Parson		23. Parson	

Chaucer Society.

Resolving for May 7

THE

Gengwrt MS

(No. 154)

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



RB. Blind. fec. HARL. MS. 4866.

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PART I.

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PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
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No. 2. **Ballads from Manuscripts.** Vol. I. Part 2, is in the Press, and will contain Ballads on Wolsey, and Anne Boleyn, with an Index and Glossary, by J. H. Baskhouse, Esq., and a Preface to the whole Volume. Edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A.

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No. 4. **Captain Cox, his Ballads and Books**, or, ROBERT LANEHAM'S Letter Whearin part of the entertainment untoo the Queenz Majesty at Killingworth Castl, in Warwik Sheer in this Soomerz Progress, 1575, is signified; from a freend officer attendaunt in the Court, unto his freend, a Citizen and Merchaut of London. Re-edited by F. J. FURNIVALL, M.A. [*In the Press.*]

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In Preparation, all the Ballads having been copied.

The Roxburghe Ballads. Edited by W. CHAPPELL, Esq.

The Civil War and Protectorate Ballads. Edited by E. F. RIMBAULT, Esq., Mus. D.

THE

Genewrt MS

(No. 154)

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PART I.

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N. TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXVIII.

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39, 51, 71
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First Series, III.

JOHN CHILDS AND SON, PRINTERS.

DEDICATED

TO

Wm. Watkin Edward Wynne, Esq.,

OF PENIARTH,

BY WHOSE KIND LEAVE

THIS HENGWRT MS IS PRINTED.

Christmas, 1868.

Library.

GROUP A. FRAGMENT I.

§ 1. GENERAL PROLOGUE.

HENGWRT MS.

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury.

W Han that Auerylle with his shoures soote [leaf 2]
The droghte of March / hath perced to the roote
And bathed euery veyne in swich lycour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour 4
Whan zephirus eek' with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in euery holt' and heeth
The tendre croppes / and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram / his half cours yronne 8
And smale foweles / maken melodye
That slepen al the nyght' with open Iye
So priketh hem nature / in hir corages
Thanne longen folk' to goon on pilgrimages 12
And Palmeres for to seeken straunge strondes
To ferne halwes / kouthe in sondry londes
And specially / from euery shyres ende
Of Engelond' / to Caunterbury they wende 16
The holy blisful martir / for to seke
That hem hath holpen whan þat they weere seeke
Bifel þat in that sesoun on a day
In Southwerk' at the Tabard' / as .I. lay 20
Redy to weenden / on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury / with ful deuout corage
At nyght was come / in to that hostelrye
Wel .xxix. in a compaignye 24
Of sondry folk / by auenture yfalle
In felawshipe / and pilgrymes weere they alle
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde

The chambres and the stables / weeren wyde 28
 And wel we weeren esed / at the beste
 And shortly whan the sonne was to reste
 So hadde I spoken with hem euerichoon
 That I was of hir felaweshipe anoon 32
 And maade forward / erly for to ryse [leaf 2, back]
 To take oure wey / ther as .I. yow deuyse
 ¶ But nathelees / while .I. haue tyme and space
 Er that I ferther / in this tale pace 36
 Me thynketh it' acordant to resoun
 To telle yow / al the condicioun
 Of eech of hem / so as it seemed me
 And whiche they weere / and of what degree 40
 And eek' in what array / þat they weere Inne
 And at a knyght' thanne wol I first bigynne
 ¶ A knyght ther was / and that a worthy man Knyght'
 That fro the tyme / þat he first bigan 44
 To ryden out' he loued chivalrye
 Trouthe and honour / fredom and curteisye
 fful worthy was he / in his lordes werre
 And ther to hadde he ryden / no man ferre 48
 As wel in cristendom / as hethenesse
 And euere honoured / for his worthynesse
 ¶ At Alisaundre he was / whan it was wonne
 fful ofte tyme / he hadde the bord bigonne 52
 Abouen alle nacions / in Puce
 In lettow / hadde he reysed / and in Ruce
 No cristen man so ofte / of his degree
 In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be 56
 At Algizir / and ryden in Belmarye
 At lyeys was he / and at Satalye
 Whan they weere wonne / and in the grete see
 At many a noble armee / hadde he bee 60
 ¶ At mortal batailles / hadde he been fiftene
 And foghten for oure feyth / at Tramysse
 In lystes thryes / and ay slayn his foo

¶ This ilke worthy knyght^t hadde been also 64
 Somtyme / with the lord of Palatye
 Agayn another hethen in Turkye
 And euere moore / he hadde a souereyn prys
 And thogh þat he weere worthy / he was wys 68
 And of his poort^t as meke / as is a mayde
 Ne neuere yet^t no vileynye he sayde
 In al his lyf vn-to no manere wight
 He was a verray perfit^t gentil knyght^t 72
 But for to tellen yow / of his array [leaf 3]
 Hise hors weere goode / but he ne was nat gay
 Of ffustian / he wered a gypoñ
 Al bismotered / with his haubergeon 76
 ffor he was laate / comen from his viage
 And wente / for to doon his pilgrymage
 ¶ With hym / ther was his sone a yong^t Squyer Squyer.
 A louere / and a lusty Bachiler 80
 With lokkes crulle / as they weere leyd in presse
 Of .xx. yeer / he was of age I gesse
 Of his stature / he was of euene lengthe
 And wonderly delyuere / and of greet strengthe 84
 And he hadde been som tyme / in chiuachye
 In fflaundes / in Artoys / and Picardye
 And born hym wel / as in so litel space
 In hope / to stonden / in his lady grace 88
 ¶ Embrouded was he / as it weere a meede
 Al ful of fresshe floures / white and reede
 Syngynge he was / or floytynge al the day
 He was as fressh / as is the Monthe of May 92
 Short was his gowne / with sleues / longe & wyde
 Wel koude he sitte on hors / and faire ryde
 He koude songes wel make / and endite
 Iuste and eek daunce / and wel portreye and write 96
 So hote he loued / that by nyghtertale
 He slepte namoore / than dooth a nyghtyngale
 Curteys he was / lowely / and seruysable

And carf biforn his fader / at the table 100
 ¶ A Yeman he hadde / and seruantz namo Yeman.
 At that tyme / for hym liste ryde so
 And he was clad / in coote and hood of greene
 A sheef of Pecok arwes / bright^t and keene 104
 Vnder his belt^t he bar ful thriftily
 Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly
 His arwes drowped noght^t with fetheres lowe
 And in his hand / he bar a myghty bowe 108
 A not heed hadde he / with a broun visage
 Of wodecraft / koude he wel al the vsage
 Vp on his arm / he bar a gay bracer
 And by his syde / a swerd and a Bokeler 112
 And on that oother syde / a gay daggere [leaf 3, back]
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 A *Cristofre* on his brest^t of siluer sheene
 An horn he bar / the bawdryk^t was of greene 116
 A fforster was he / soothly as I gesse
 ¶ Ther was also / a Nonne a Prioressse Prioressse.
 That of hir smylyng^t was ful symple and coy
 Hir gretteste ooth / was but by Seint Loy 120
 And she was clepyd / madame Eglentyne
 fful wel she soong^t the seruyce dyuyne,
 Entuned in hir nose / ful semely
 And frenssh she spak^t ful faire and fetisly 124
 After the scole / of Stratford at the Bowe
 ffor frenssh of Parys / was to hire vnknowe
 At mete / wel ytaught^t was she with alle
 She leet^t no morsel / from hir lyppes falle 128
 Ne wette hir fyngres / in hir sauce deepe
 Wel koude she carye a morsel / and wel keepe
 That no drope / fille vp on hir brist^t
 In curteisye / was set muchel hir list^t 132
 Hir ouer lyppe / wyped she so cleene
 That in hir coppe / ther was no ferthyng^t seene
 Of grece / whan she dronken hadde hir draghte

fful semely / after hir mete she raghte 136
 And sikerly / she was of greet^t desport^t
 And ful plesaunt^t and amyable of port^t
 And peyned hire / to countrefete chiere
 Of Court^t and been estatlich of manere 140
 And to been holden / digne of reuerence
 But for to speken / of hir conscience
 She was so charitable / and so pitous
 She wolde wepe / if þat she sawe a Mous 144
 Caught in a trappe / if it weere deed / or bledde
 Of smale houndes / hadde she / þat she fedde
 With rosted flessĥ / or mylk / and wastel breed
 But soore wepte she / if oon of hem weere deed 148
 Or if men smoot^t it / with a yerde smerte
 And al was conscience / and tendre herte
 fful semely / hir wympel pynched was
 Hir nose tretez / hir eyen / greye as glas 152
 Hir mouth ful smal / and ther to / softe and reed [leaf 4]
 But sikerly / she hadde a fair forheed
 It was almoost^t a spanne brood I trowe
 ffor hardily / she was nat vndergrowe 156
 fful fetys was hir cloke / as I was war
 Of smal Coral / aboute hir arm she bar
 A peyre of bedes / gauded al with greene
 And ther on heeng^t a brooch of gold ful sheene 160
 On which / was first writen / a crowned .A.
 And after / *lamor vincit^t omnia.*
 ¶ Another Nonne / with hire hadde she,
 That was hire Chapeleyne / and preestes thre.
 ¶ A Monk ther was / a fair for the maystrye Monk.
 An outrydere / that^t louede venerye
 A manly man / to been an Abbot able
 fful many a deyntee hors / hadde he in stable 168
 And whanne he rood / men myghte his brydel heere
 Gyngle in a whistlynge wynd / as cleere
 And eek^t as loude / as dooth the Chapel belle

Nonne Chap-
 eleyne and
 thre prestes.

¶ A frere ther was / a wantowne and a merye,	¶ frere.
A lymytour / a ful solempne man	209
In alle the ordres foure / is noon þat kan	
So muche of daliaunce / and fair langage	
He hadde maked / ful many a mariage	212
Of yonge wommen / at his owene cost	
Vn to his ordre / he was a noble post	
fful wel biloued / and famylier was hee	
With ffrankeleyns / ouer al in his contree	216
And eek with worthy wommen / of the town	
ffor he hadde / power of confessioun	
As seyde him self / moore than a curaat	
ffor of his ordre / he was licenciaat	220
fful swetely / herde he confessioun	
And plesant. was his absolucioun	
He was an esy man / to yeue penaunce	
Ther as he wiste / to haue a good pitaunce	224
ffor vn to a poure ordre / for to yeue	
Is signe / that a man / is wel yshryue	
ffor if he yaf he dorste make auaunt	
He wiste / þat a man was repentaunt	228
ffor many a man / so hard is of his herte	
He may nat weepe / thogh þat he soore smerte	
Ther fore / in stede of wepyng / and preyer	
Men moote yeue siluer / to the poure freres	232
¶ His typet was ay farsed ful of knyues	[leaf 5]
And pynnes / for to yeuen faire wyues	
And certeynly / he hadde a murye noote	
Wel koude he synge / and pleyen on a roote	236
Of yeddynges / he bar outrely the prys	
His nekke whit was / as the flour delys	
Ther to he stroong was / as a Champioun	
He knew the tauernes wel in euery town	240
And euery hostiler / and Tappestere	
Bet / than a lazer / or a beggestere	
ffor vn to swich a worthy man / as he	

Acorded nat / as by his facultee	244
To haue / with syke lazars aqueyntaunce	
It is nat honeste / it may noght auaunce	
ffor to deelen / with no swich poraille	
But al with riche / and sellerys of vitaille	248
And ouer al / ther as profit sholde aryse	
Curteys he was / and lowely of seruyse	
Ther was no man / nowheer / so vertuous	
He was the beste beggere / of his hous	252
And yaf a certeyn ferme / for the graunt	252 <i>b</i>
Noon of his bretheren / cam ther in his haunt	252 <i>c</i>
ffor thogh a wydwe / hadde noght a sho	253
So plesant was his In principio	
Yet wolde he haue a ferthyng ^r er he wente	
His purchaas / was wel bettre than his rente	256
And rage he koude / as it weere right a whelp	
In louedayes / koude he muchel helpe	
ffor there / he was nat lyk a Cloyster	
With a threedbare cope / as is a poure scoler	260
But he was lyk a maister / or a Pope	
Of double worstede / was his semycope	
And rounded as a belle / out of the presse	
Somwhat he lyped / for his wantownesse	264
To make his englyssh / sweete vp on his tonge	
And in his harpyng ^r whan þat he hadde songe	
Hise eyen twynkled / in his heed aryght	
As doon the sterres / in the frosty nyght	268
This worthy lymytour / was cleped Huberd	
¶ A Marchant was ther / with a forked berd	Marchaunt.
In Motlee / and hye on hors he sat	[leaf 5, back]
Vp on his heed / a fflaundryssh Beuere hat	272
His bootes clasped / faire and fetisly	
Hise resons / he spak ful solempnely	
Sownyng ^r alway / thencrees of his wynnynge	
He wolde / the see weere kept for any thyng	276
Bitwixen Myddelburgh / and Orewelle	

Wel koude he / in eschaunge / sheeldes selle
 This worthy man / ful wel his wit bisette
 Ther wiste no wight. that he was in dette. 280
 So estaatly was he / of his gouernaunce
 With his bargaynes / and with his cheuysaunce
 ffor soothe / he was a worthy man with alle
 But sooth to seyn / I noot how men hym calle 284
 ¶ A Clerc ther was / of Oxenford also ¶ Clerc of Oxenforde.
 That vn to logyk. hadde longe ygo
 As leene was his hors / as is a rake in
 And he was noght right fat I vndertake 288
 But looked holwe / and ther to sobrelly
 fful threedbaare / was his ouereste Courtepy
 ffor he hadde / geten hym yet no benefice
 Ne was so worldly / for to haue office 292
 For hym was leuere / haue at his beddes heed
 Twenty bookes / clad / in blak / or reed
 Of Aristotle / and his Philosophye
 Than robes riche / or ffithelle / or gay Sautrye 296
 But al be / that he was a Philosophre
 Yet hadde he / but litel gold in Cofre
 But al that he myghte / of his frendes hente
 On bookes / and on lernynge / he it spente 300
 And bisily / gan for the soules preye
 Of hem / that yaf hym / wher with to scoleye
 Of studye / took he moost cure and moost heede
 Noght oo word spak he / moore than was neede 304
 And that was spoke / in forme / and reuerence
 And short and quyk and ful of heigh sentence
 Sowynge in moral vertu / was his speche
 And gladly wolde he lerne / and gladly teche 308
 ¶ A Sergeaunt of lawe / waar / and wys ¶ Sergeaunt of Lawe.
 That often / hadde been at the Parvys
 Ther was also / ful ryche of excellence [leaf 6]
 Discreet he was / and of greet reuerence 312
 He seemed swich / hise wordes weeren so Wyse

Iustice he was / ful often in Assise
 By patente / and by pleyn commissioun
 ffor his science / and for his heigh renoun 316
 Of fees and robes / hadde he many oon
 So greet a purchasour / was nowher noon
 Al was fee symple / to hym / in effect
 His purchasyng^t myghte nat been infect 320
 Nowher so bisy a man as he / ther nas
 And yet he seemed / bisyer than he was
 In termes / hadde he caas / and doomes alle
 That from tyme of kyng william / weere falle 324
 Ther to / he koude endite / and make a thyng^t
 Ther koude no wight^t pynchen at his writyng^t
 And euery statut^t. koude he pleyn by roote
 He rood but hoomly / in a medlee coote 328
 Girt with a ceynt of sylk^t. with barres smale
 Of his array / telle I no lenger tale
 ¶ A ffrankeleyn / was in his compaignye ¶ ffrankeleyn.
 Whit was his berd / as is the dayesye 332
 Of his complexcion / he was sangwyn
 Wel loued he by the morwe / a sope in wyn
 To lyuen in delyt^t was euere his wone
 ffor he was / Epicurus owene sone 336
 That heeld opynyon / þat pleyn delit
 Was verray / felicitee parfit
 An housholdere / and that a greet was hee
 Seint Iulyan he was / in his contree 340
 His breed / his ale / was always after oon
 A bettre envyned man / was neuere noon
 With outen bake mete / was neuere his hous
 Of fresshe fisshe / and flesshe / and that so plenteuous 344
 It snewed in his hous / of mete and drynke
 Of alle deyntees / þat men koude bithynke
 After / the sondry sesons / of the yeer
 So chaunged he / his mete / and his soper 348
 fful many a fat partrych / hadde he in Muwe

And many a breem / and many a luce in Stuwe
 Wo was his Cook^t / but if his Sauce weere [leaf 6, back]
 Poynaunt^t and sharpe / and redy al his geere 352
 His table dormaunt^t in his halle alway
 Stood redy couered / al the longe day
 At sessions / ther was he / lord and sire
 fful ofte tyme / he was knyght of the Shire 356
 An Anlaas / and a Gipser / al of Sylk^t
 Heengt^t at his girdel / whit as morne mylk^t
 A Shirreue hadde he been / and Countour
 Was nowheer / swich a worthy vauasour 360
 ¶ An haberdasshere / and a Carpenter { Haberdasshere
 A Webbe / a Dyere / and a Tapycer { Carpenter.
 And they weere clothed alle / in oo lyueree { Webbe.
 Of a solempne / and a greet fraternytee { Dyere.
 fful fressh and newe / hir geere apyked was { Tapycer. 364
 Hir knyues weere chaped / noght with bras
 But al with siluer / wroght ful clene and wel
 Hir girdles / and hir pouches / euerydel 368
 Wel seemed eech of hem / a fair Burgeys
 To sitten in a yeldehalle / on a days
 Euerych / for the wisdom / þat he kan
 Was shaply / for to been an Alderman 372
 ffor catel / hadde they ynogh / and rente
 And eek hir wyues / wolde it wel assente
 And ellis certeyn / they weere to blame
 It is ful fair / to been yclepyd madame 376
 And goon to vigilies / al bifore
 And haue a Mantel / realliche ybore
 ¶ A Cook they hadde with hem / for the nones Cook^t.
 To boille the chiknes / with the Marybones 380
 And poudre marchaunt^t. tart^t and / Galyngale
 Wel koude he knowe / a draghte of london ale
 He koude rooste / and seethe / and broille / & frye
 Maken Mortreux / and wel bake a pye 384
 But greet harm was it as it thoughte me

That on his Shyne / a Mormal hadde he
 ffor Blankmanger / that maade he with the beste
 ¶ A Shipman was ther / wonyng fer by weste Shipman.
 ffor aught I woot^t he was of Dertemouthe 389
 He rood vp on a Rouncey / as he kouthē
 In a gowne of faldyng^t to the knee [leaf 7]
 A daggere hangyngē on a laas / hadde he 392
 Aboutē his nekke / vnder his arm adown
 The hoote Somer / hadde maad his hewe al brown
 And certeynly / he was a good felawe
 fful many a draghte of wyn / hadde he drawe 396
 ffro Burdeuxward^t / whil þat the Chapman sleepe
 Of nyce conscience / took he no keepe
 If þat he faght^t and hadde the hyer hond^t
 By watre he sente hem hoom / to euery lond^t 400
 But of his craft^t to rekene wel his tydes
 His stremys / and his daungers hym bisydes
 His herberwe and his moone / his lodmenage
 Ther was noon swich / from hulle to Cartage 404
 Hardy he was / and wys to vndertake
 With many a tempest^t hadde his beard been shake
 He knew alle the hauenes / as they weere
 ffro Gootlond / to the cape of ffynysteere 408
 And euery cryke / in Britaigne / and in Spaigne
 His barge / y-clepyd was the Mawdelayne
 ¶ With vs / ther was / a Doctour of Phisyk^t Doctour of
Phisyk^t.
 In al this world / ne was ther noon hym lyk^t
 To speken of Phisyk^t and of Surgerye 413
 ffor he was groundēd / in Astronomye
 He kepte his pacient^t a ful greet deel
 In houres / by his magyk natureel 416
 Wel koude he fortunē / the ascendent^t
 Of hise ymages / for his pacient^t
 He knew the cause / of euery maladye
 Weere it^t of hoot^t or coold / or moyste / or drye 420
 And where it engendred / and of what humour

He was a verray / *perfit* practisour
 The cause yknowe / and of his harm the roote
 Anoon he yaf / the sike man his boote 424
 ¶ fful redy hadde he / hise Apothecaryes
 To senden hym / his drogges / and his letuaryes
 ffor eech of hem / maade oother for to wynne
 Hir frendshipe / was noght newe to bigynne 428
 Wel knew he / the oolde Esculapyus
 And Discorides / and eek¹ Rusus
 Olde ypocras / Haly / and Galyen [leaf 7, back]
 Serapion / Razis / and Avycen 432
 Auerroys / Damascien / and Constantyn
 Bernard / and Gatesden / and Gilbertyn
 Of his diete / mesurable was hee
 ffor it was / of no superfluytee 436
 But of greet norissyng / and digestible
 His studye / was but litel on the Bible
 In sangwyn and in Pers / he clad was al
 Lynced with Taffata / and with Sendal 440
 And yet he was / but esy of dispence
 He kepte / þat he wan in pestilence
 ffor gold in Phisyk¹. is a Cordial
 Ther fore / he loued gold in special 444
 ¶ A good wyf was ther / of bisyde Bathe The Goode Wyf
 But she was som del deef¹ and that was scathe of bisyde Bathe.
 Of clooth makynge / she hadde swich an haunt¹
 She passed hem / of Ipres / and of Gaunt¹ 448
 In al the parysshe / wyf ne was ther noon
 That to the offrynge / bifore hire sholde goon
 And if ther dide / certeyn / so wrooth was shee
 That she was / out of alle charitee 452
 Hir Couerchiefes / ful fyne weere of grownd¹
 I dorste swere / they weyeden. ten pownd¹
 That on a Sonday / weeren vp on hir heed
 Hir hosen weeren / of fyn Scarlet reed 456
 fful streyte yteyd / and shoes / ful moyste & newe

Boold was hir face / and fair and reed of hewe
 She was a worthy womman / al hir lyue
 Housbondes at chirche dore / she hadde fyue 460
 With outen oother compaignye / in yowthe
 But ther of / nedeth noght to speke as nowthe
 And thries / hadde she been at Ierusalem
 She hadde passed / many a straunge strem 464
 At Rome she hadde been / and at Boloyn
 In Galyce at Seint Iame / and at Coloyne
 She koude muchel / of wandrynge by the weye
 Gattothed was she / soothly for to seye 468
 Vp on an Amblere / esily she sat
 Ywympled wel / and on hir heed an hat
 As brood as is / a Bokeler / or a Targe [leaf 8]
 A foot mantel / aboute hir hypes large 472
 And on hir feet a peyre of spores sharpe
 In felaweshipe / wel koude she laughe. and carpe
 Of remedies of loue / she knew *par* chaunce
 ffor she koude of that art the olde daunce 476
 ¶ A good man / was ther / of Religioun
 And was a poure parson / of a toun *Parson of a town.*
 But riche he was / of holy thought and werk
 He was also / a lerned man a Clerk 480
 That Cristes gospel / trewely wolde *preche*
 His parisshe / deuoutly wolde he teche
 Benygne he was / and wonder diligent
 And in aduersitee / ful pacient 484
 And swich he was proeued / ofte sythes
 fful looth weere hym / to cursen for his tythes
 But rather wolde he yeuen / out of doute
 Vn to his poure parisshe aboute 488
 Of his offrynge / and eek of his substaunce
 He koude in litel thyng haue suffisaunce
 Wyd was his parisshe / and houses fer a sonder
 But he ne lafte noght for reyn ne thonder 492
 In siknesse / nor in meschief to visite

The ferreste in his parisshe / muche and lyte
 Vp on his feet and in his hond a staf
 This noble ensample / to his sheep he yaf 496
 That first he wroghte / and afterward he taughte
 Out of the gospel / he tho wordes caughte
 And this figure / he added eek ther to
 That if gold ruste / what sholde Iren do 500
 ffor if a preest be foul / in whom we truste
 No wonder is / a lewed man to ruste
 And shame it is / if a preest take keepe
 A shiten shepherde / and a clene sheepe 504
 Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yiue
 By his clenness / how þat his sheep sholde lyue
 He sette noght. his benefice to hyre
 And leet his sheep / encombred in the Myre 508
 And ran to Londoñ / vn to Seint Poules
 To seeken hym / a Chauntrye for soules
 Or with a bretherede / to been withhoolde [leaf 8, back]
 But dwelte at hoom / and kepte wel his foolde 512
 So þat the wolf ne maade it noght myscharye
 He was a shepherde / and noght a Mercenarye
 And thogh he hooly weere / and vertuous
 He was noght to synful men despitous 516
 Ne of his speche / daungerous / ne digne
 But in his techyng discreet and benygne
 To drawen folk to heuene / with fairnesse
 By good ensample / this was his bisynesse 520
 But it weere / any persone obstynaat
 What so he weere / of heigh / or lowe estaat
 Hym wolde he snybben / sharply for the nonys
 A better preest I trowe ther nowher noon ys 524
 He wayted / after no pompe / and reuerence
 Ne maked hym / a spyced conscience
 But Cristes loore / and hise Apostles twelue
 He taughte / but first he folwed it hym selue 528
 ¶ With hym ther was a Plowman / was his broother Plowman.

That hadde ylad of donge / ful many a ffoother
 A trewe swynkere / and a good was he
 Lyuyng in pees / and perfit charitee 532
 God loued he best with al his hoole herte
 At alle tymes / thogh hym gamed / or smerte
 And thanne his Neighebore / right as hym selue
 He wolde thresshe / and ther to / dyke and delue 536
 ffor Cristes sake / with euery poure wight
 With outen hyre / if it laye in his myght
 His tythes payde he / ful faire and wel
 Bothe of his propre swynk and his catel 540
 In a Tabard he rood / vp on a Mere
 Ther was also / a Reue / and a Millere
 A Somonour / and a Pardoner also
 A Maunciple / and my self ther weere namo 544
 ¶ The Millere / was a stout carl / for the nones
 Millere.
 fful byg he was / of brawen / and eek of bones
 That proeued wel / for ouer al ther he cam
 At wrastlyng / he wolde haue alwey the Ram 548
 He was short shuldred / brood / a thikke knarre
 Ther was no dore / that he noolde heue of harre
 Or breke it at a rennyng / with his heed [leaf 9]
 His beerd / as any sowe / or fox / was reed 552
 And ther to brood / as thogh it weere a spaade
 Vp on the cope right of his nose he haade
 A werte / and ther on stood / a tuft of heerys
 Reede / as the bristles / of a Soves eerys 556
 Hise nosethirles / blake weere and wyde
 A swerd and a bokeler / baar he by his syde
 His mouth as greet was / as a greet fourneys
 He was a Ianglere / a Golyardeys 560
 And that was moost of synne and harlotryes
 Wel koude he stelen corn / and tollen thryes
 And yet he hadde / a thombe of gold pardee
 A whit coote / and a blew hood wered hee 564
 A Baggepipe / wel koude he / blowe and sowne

And ther with al / he broghte vs out of towne

¶ A gentil Maunciple / was ther / of a Temple

Maunciple.

Of which / Achatours myghte take exemple

568

ffor to been wyse / in byynge of vitaille

ffor wheither þat he payde / or took by taille

Algate he wayted so / in his achaat

That he was ay biforn / and in good staat

¶ Now is nat that of god / a ful greet grace

That swich a lewed mannes wit^t shal pace

The wysdom / of an heepe / of lerned men

Of Maistres hadde he mo / than thryes ten

576

That weeren of lawe / expert^t and curious

Of whiche / ther weere a dozeyne / in that hous

Worthy / to been stywardes / of rente / and lond^t

Of any lord / that is in Engelon^t

580

To make hym lyue / by his propre good

In honour dettelees / but if he weere wood

Or lyue as scarsly / as hym lyst desire

And able / for to helpen al a Shire

584

In any caas / that myghte falle or happe

And yet this Maunciple / sette hir aller cappe

¶ The Reue / was a sclendre coleryk^t man

Reue

His beerd was shaue / as neigh as euer he kan

588

His heer was by his eerys / ful rownd yshorn

His tope was dokked / lyk^t a preest byforn

fful longe weere hise legges / and ful leene

[leaf 9, back]

Ylik a staf^t. ther was no calf yseene

592

Wel koude he keepe / a Gerner and a Bynne

Ther was noon Auditour / koude on hym wynne

Wel wiste he / by the droghte and by the reyn

The yeldynge / of his seed / and of his greyn

596

His lordes sheepe / his neet / his dayerye

His swyn / his hors / his stoor / and his pultrye

Was hoolly / in this Reues gouernynge

And by his couenant^t. yaf the rekenynge

600

Syn that his loord / was twenty yeer of age

Ther koude no man / brynge hym in arrerage
 Ther nas Baillyf. hierde / nor oother hyne
 That he ne knew / his sleyghte / and his couyne 604
 They weere adrad of hym / as of the deeth
 His wonyng^t was ful faire vp on an heeth
 With greene trees / shadwed was his place
 He koude bettre / than his lord purchace 608
 fful riche / he was astoorded pryuely
 His lord / wel koude he plesen subtilly
 To yeue / and leene hym / of his owene good
 And haue a thank^t. and yet a coote and hood 612
 In youthe / he lerned hadde / a good Mister
 He was a wel good wrighte / a Carpenter
 This Reue sat^t vp on a wel good Stot^t
 That was a Pomely gray / and highte Scot^t 616
 A long Surcote of Pers / vp on he haade
 And by his syde / he baar a rusty blaade
 Of Northfolk was this Reue / of which I telle
 Bisyde a town / men clepyn Baldeswelle 620
 Tukked he was / as is a frere aboute
 And euere he rood / the hyndreste of oure route
 ¶ A Somonour / was ther with vs / in that place *Somonour.*
 That hadde / a fyr-reed Cherubynnes face 624
 ffor Sawceflewm he was / with eyen narwe
 And hoot he was / and lecherous as a Sparwe
 With scaled browes blake / and pyled berd^t
 Of his visage / children weere aferd^t 628
 Ther nas quykt^t siluer / lytarge / ne Brymstoon
 Borace / Ceruce / ne Oille of Tartre noon
 Ne oynement^t. that wolde clense and byte *[leaf 10]*
 That hym myghte helpen / of his wheelkes whyte 632
 Nor of the knobbes / sittynge on his chekes
 Wel loued he garlek^t oynons and eek lekes
 And for to drynke strong wyn / reed as blood
 Thanne wolde he speke / and crye as he were wood 636
 [.]

[. *no gap in the MS.*]
A fewe termes hadde he / two / or thre
That he hadde lerned / out of som decree 640
No wonder is / he herde it al the day
And eek ye knowe wel / how þat a Iay
Kan clepen watte / as wel as kan the Pope
But who so koude / in oother thyng hym grope 644
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophie
Ay Questio quid iuris wolde he crye
¶ He was a gentil harlot and a kynde
A bettre felawe / sholde men noght fynde 648
He wolde suffre / for a quart of wyn
A good felawe / to haue his concubyn
A twelf monthe / and excusen hym at the fulle
fful pryuely / a fynch eek koude he pulle 652
And if he foond owher / a good felawe
He wolde techen hym / to haue noon awe
In swich caas / of the Ercedeknes curs
But if a mannes soule / were in his purs 656
ffor in his purs / he sholde ypunysshed be
Purs is the Ercedeknes helle / seyde he
¶ But wel I woot he lyed right in dede
Of cursyng^t oghte ech gilty man [to] drede 660
ffor curs wol sle / right as assoillyng^t sauyth
And also / war hym of a significaut /
¶ In daunger hadde he / at his owene gyse
The yonge gerles / of the diocise 664
And knew hir conseil / and was al hir reed
A gerland / hadde he set vp on his heed
As greet^t. as it were / for an Ale stake
A bokeler / hadde he maad hym of a cake 668
¶ With hym ther rood / a gentil Pardoner **Pardoner.**
Of Rounceyual / his freend / and his comper
That streight was comen / fro the Court of Rome
fful loude he soong^t com hyder loue to me 672
This Somonour baar to hym / a styf burdoun [leaf 10, back]

Was neuere trompe / of half so greet a soun
 ¶ This Pardoner / hadde heer / as yelow as wax
 But smothe it heeng^t as dooth a stryke of flex 676
 By ounces / henge his lokkes þat he hadde
 And ther with / he his shuldres ouerspradde
 But thynne it lay / by colpons oon and oon
 But hood for Iolitee / wered he noon 680
 ffor it was trussed vp / in his walet^t
 Hym thoughte / he rood al of the newe Iet^t
 Discheuele saue his cappe / he rood al bare
 Swiche glarynge eyen / hadde he as an hare 684
 A vernycle / hadde he sowed / vp on his cappe
 His walet^t [lay] biforn hym / in his lappe
 Bretful of pardoñ / comen from Rome al hoot^t
 A voys he hadde / as smal / as hath a Goot^t 688
 No berd hadde he / ne neuere sholde haue
 As smothe it was / as it were late yshaue
 I trowe he were a geldyng^t or a Mare
 But of his craft^t. fro Berwyk in to Ware 692
 Ne was ther / swich another Pardoner
 ffor in his Male / he hadde a pilwe beer
 Which þat he seyde / was oure lady veyl
 He seyde he hadde / a gobet of the seyl 696
 That seint Peter hadde / whan þat he wente
 Vp on the see / til Ihesu Crist hym hente
 He hadde a cros of latonⁿ / ful of stones
 And in a glas / he hadde pigges bones 700
 But with thise relykes / whan þat he foond
 A poure parson / dwellyng vp on lond
 Vp on a day / he gat hym moore moneye
 Than þat the parson gat / in Monthes tweye 704
 And thus / with feyned flaterye and Iapes
 He made the parson / and the peple his apes
 But trewely / to tellen at the laste
 He was in chirche / a noble Ecclesiaste 708
 Wel koude he / rede a lesson / and a Storie

But alderbest^t he soong an Offertorie
 ffor wel he wiste / whan þat soong was songe
 He moste *preche* / and wel affyle hys tonge 712
 To wynne siluer / as he ful wel koude [leaf 11]
 Ther fore he soong^t the muryerly and loude
 ¶ Now haue I toold yow / soothly in a clause
 Thestaat / tharray / the nombre / and eek the cause 716
 Why þat assembled was this compaignye
 In Southwerk^t. at this gentil hostelrye
 That highte the tabard^t / faste by the belle
 But now is tyme / to yow for to telle 720
 How þat we baren vs / that ilke nyght^t
 Whan we weere / in that hostelrye alyght^t
 And after wol I telle / of oure viage
 And al the remenant^t of oure pilgrymage 724
 ¶ But first I pray yow / of youre curteisye
 That ye narette it / noght my vileynye
 Though þat I pleynly speke / in this matere
 To telle yow / hir wordes / and hir cheere 728
 Ne thogh I speke / hir wordes proprely
 ffor this ye knowen / also wel as I
 Who so shal telle a tale / after a man
 He moot reherce / as neigh as euere he kan 732
 Euerich a word / if it be in his charge
 Al speke he / neuer so rudeliche and large
 Or ellis / he moot telle his tale vntrewe
 Or feyne thyng^t or fynde wordes newe 736
 He may noght spare / althogh he weere his brother
 He moot as wel / seye o word / as another
 Crist spak hym self^t ful brode in holy writ
 And wel ye woot^t no vileynye is it 740
 Ek Plato seith / who so kan hym rede
 The wordes / mote be cosyn / to the dede
 ¶ Also I pray yow / to foryeue it me
 Al haue I nat set folk / in hir degree 744
 Here in this tale / as þat they sholde stonde

My wit is short^t ye may wel vnderstonde
 ¶ Greet cheere / made oure hoost vs euerichon
 And to the souper / sette he vs anon 748
 He serued vs / with vitaille / at the beste
 Strong was the wyn / and wel to drynke vs leste
 A semely man / oure hoost was with alle
 ffor to been / a Marchal in an halle 752
 A large man he was / with eyen stepe [leaf 11, back]
 A fairer burgeys / was ther noon in Chepe
 Boold of his speche / and wys / and well ytaught^t
 And of manhode / hym lakked right naught^t 756
 Eke ther to / he was right a murye man
 And after souper / pleyen he bigan
 And spak of murthe / amonges othere thynges
 Whan þat we hadde maad oure rekenynges 760
 And seyde thus / now lordes trewely
 Ye been to me / right wel come hertely
 ffor by my trouthe / if þat I shal nat lye
 I seigh noght this yeer / so mury a compaignye 764
 At ones in this herberwe / as is now
 flayn wolde I doon yow myrthe / wiste I how
 And of a myrthe / I am right now bithoght^t
 To doon yow ese / and it shal coste noght^t 768
 ¶ Ye goon to Caunterbury / god yow spede
 The blisful Martir / quyte yow youre mede
 And wel I woot^t as ye goon by the weye
 Ye shapen yow / to talen and to pleye 772
 ffor trewely / confort / ne murthe is noon
 To ryde by the weye / domb as stoon
 And ther fore / wol I maken yow desport^t
 As I seyde erst^t and doon yow som confort^t 776
 And if yow liketh alle / by oon assent^t
 ffor to stonden / at my Iuggement^t
 And for to werken / as I shal yow seye
 Tomorwe / whan ye ryden by the weye 780
 Now by my fader soule / þat is deed

But ye be murye / I wol yeue yow myn heed
 Hoold vp youre hondes / with outen moore speche
 ¶ Oure conseil / was nat longe for to seehe 784
 Vs thoughte / it was nat worth / to make it wys
 And graunted hym / with outen moore avys
 And bade hym seye / his voidit^t as hym leste
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / now herkneth for the beste 788
 But taketh it noght^t I pray yow in desdeyn
 This is the poynt^t to speken short and pleyn
 That ech of yow / to shorte with oure weye
 In this viage / shal tellen tales tweye 792
 To Caunterburyward^t / I mene it so [leaf 12]
 And homward / he shal tellen othere two
 Of auentures / þat whilom haue bifalle
 And which of yow / þat bereth hym best of alle 796
 That is to seyn / that telleth in this cas
 Tales of best sentence / and moost solas
 Shal haue a Souper / at oure aller cost^t
 Here in this place / sittynge by this post^t 800
 Whan that we come agayn / fro Caunterbury
 And for to make yow / the moore mury
 I wol my self^t goodly wit[h] yow ryde
 Right at myn owene cost^t and be youre gyde 804
 And who so wole / my Iuggement with seye
 Shal paye / al that we spende by the weye
 And if ye vouche sauf / þat it be so
 Tel me anoon / with outen wordes mo 808
 And I wol erly / shape me ther fore
 ¶ This thyng was graunted / and oure othes swore
 With ful glad herte / and preyden hym also
 That he wolde vouche sauf / for to do so 812
 And that he wolde been / oure gouernour
 And of oure tales / Iuge and reportour
 And sette a souper / at a certeyn prys
 And we wol ruled been / at his deuys 816
 In heigh and logh / and thus by oon assent^t

We been acorded / to his Iuggement^t
 And ther vp on / the wyn was fet anoon
 We dronken / and to reste wente echon 820
 With outen / any lenger tarynge
 ¶ A morwe / whan þat day bigan to sprynge
 Vp roos oure hoost^t and was oure aller cok^t
 And gadred vs / togydres in a flok^t 824
 And forth we ryden / a litel moore than pas
 Vn to the wateryng^t of Seint Thomas
 And there oure hoost^t bigan his hors areste
 And seyde / lordes / herkneth if yow leste 828
 ¶ Ye woot youre forward / and it yow recorde
 If euensong / and morwesong^t acorde
 Lat se now / who shal telle the firste tale
 As euere mote I drynke wyn / or Ale 832
 Who so be rebel / to my Iuggement^t [leaf 12, back]
 Shal paye / for al / that by the wey is spent
 Now draweth cut^t er þat we ferrer twynne
 He which þat hath the shorteste / shal bigynne 836
 ¶ Sire knyght quod he / my mayster and my lord
 Now draweth cut^t for that is myn acord
 Cometh neer quod he / my lady Prioressse
 And ye sire Clerc^t. lat be your shamefastnesse 840
 Ne studieth noght^t ley hond to / euery man
 ¶ Anoon to drawen / euery wight bigan
 And shortly / for to tellen / as it was
 Were it by auenture / or sort^t or cas 844
 The sothe is this / the Cut fil to the knyght^t
 Of which ful blithe and glad was euery wight^t
 And telle he moste his tale / as was resoun
 By forward / and by composicio^{un}n 848
 As ye han herd / what nedeth wordes mo
 And whan this goode man / sawgh þat it was
 As he / þat wys was / and obedient^t
 To kepe his forward / by his free assent^t 852
 He seyde / syn I shal bigynne the game

What wel come be the Cut' in goddes name
 Now lat vs ryde / and herkneth what I seye
 And with that word / we ryden forth oure weye .856
 And he bigan / with right a murye cheere
 His tale anoon / and seyde as ye may heere

¶ *Iamque domos patria Scithice post aspera gentis
prelia laurigero.*

Here bigynneth the knyghtes tale.

Whilom / as olde stories tellen vs
 Ther was a duc þat highte Theseus 860
 Of Atthenes / he was lord and gouernour
 And in his tyme / swich a conquerour
 That gretter was ther noon vnder the sonne
 fful many a riche contree / hadde he wonne 864
 What with his wysdom / and his chiualrye
 He conquered / al the regne of femenye
 That whilom / was ycleped Scithia [leaf 13]
 And wedded / the queene ypolita 868
 And broghte hire hom with hym / in his contree
 With muchel glorie / and greet solempnitee
 And eek / hir yonge suster Emelye
 And thus with victorie / and with melodye 872
 Lete I this noble duc to Atthenes ryde
 And al his hoost. in armes hym bisyde
 ¶ And certes / if it nere to long to heere
 I wolde haue toold / fully the manere 876
 How / wonnen was the regne of ffemenye
 By Theseus / and by his Chiualrye
 And of the grete bataille / for the nones
 Bitwixen Atthenes / and Amazones 880
 And how assegeged was ypolita
 The faire hardy queene of Scithia
 And of the feste / þat was at hir weddyng
 And of the tempest at hir hom comyng 884
 But al that thyng / I moot as now forbere
 I haue god woot / a large feeld to ere
 And wayke / been the oxen in my plogh
 The remenant of the tale / is long ynogh 888
 I wol nat letten eek / noon of this route

Lat euery felawe / telle his tale aboute
 And lat se now / who shal the souper Wynne
 And ther I lefte / I wol ayein bigynne [*A break in the MS. with*]
 This duc / of Whom I make mencion Incipit narracio (a)
T Whanne he was come / almoost to the town
 In al his wele / and in his mooste pryde
 He was war / as he caste his eye asyde 896
 Wher þat ther kneled / in the heighe weye
 A compaignye of ladyes / tweye and tweye
 Ech after oother / clad in clothes blake
 But swich a cry and swich a wo they make 900
 That in this world / nys creature lyuyng
 That herde / swich another waymentyng
 And of this cry / they nolde neuere stenten [leaf 13, back]
 Til they / the reynes of his brydel henten 904
 ¶ What folk been ye / þat at myn hom comyng
 Perturben so my feste / with cryyng
 Quod Theseus / haue ye so greet envie
 Of myn honour / that thus compleyne *and* crye 908
 Or who hath yow mysboden / or offended
 And telleth me / if it may been amended
 And why þat ye / been clothed thus in blak/
 The eldeste lady / of hem alle spak 912
 Whan she hadde swowned / *with* a deedly cheere
 That it was routhe / for to seen and heere
 ¶ She seyde / lord / to whom ffortune hath yiuen
 Victorie / and as a Conquerour to lyuen 916
 Noght greueth vs youre glorie / and youre honour
 But we biseken / mercy and socour
 Haue mercy on oure wo / and oure distresse
 Som drope of pitee / thurgh thy gentillesse 920
 Vp on vs wrecched wommen / lat thow falle
 ffor *certes* lord / ther is noon of vs alle
 That she ne hath been / a duchesse / or a queene
 Now be we caytyues / as it is wel seene 924
 Thanked be ffortune / and hir false wheel

That noon estaat' assureth to been weel
 Now certes lord / to abiden youre presence
 Heere in this temple / of the goddesse clemence 928
 We haue been waytynge / al this fourtenyght
 Now help vs lord / syth it is in thy myght
 ¶ I wrecche / which þat wepe and waille thus
 Was whilom wyf / to kyng' Cappaneus 932
 That starf at Thebes / cursed be the day
 And alle we / þat been in this array
 And maken / al this lamentacioun
 We losten alle oure housbondes / at that town 936
 Whil þat the sege / ther aboute lay
 And yet now / the olde Creon weylaway
 That lord is now / of Thebes the Citee
 ffulfild of Ire / and of Iniquitee 940
 He for despit / and for his tyrannye
 To doon / the dede bodyes vileynye
 Of alle oure lordes / whiche þat been slawe [leaf 14]
 Hath alle the bodyes / on an heepe ydrawe 944
 And wol nat suffren hem / by noon assent
 Neyther to been yburyed / nor ybrent
 But maketh houndes / ete hem in despit
 And with that word / with outen moore respit' 948
 They fillen gruf' and cryden pitously
 Haue / on vs wrecched wommen / som mercy
 And lat oure sorwe / synken in thyn herte
 ¶ This gentil duc' down from his courser sterte 952
 With herte pitous / whan he herde hem speke
 Hym thoughte / þat his herte wolde breke
 Whan he saugh hem / so pitous / and so maat
 That whilom weren / of so greet estaat' 956
 And in hise armes / he hem alle vp hente
 And hem conforteth / in ful good entente
 And swoor his ooth / as he was trewe knyght
 He wolde doon / so ferforthly his myght' 960
 Vp on the tiraunt Creon / hem to wreke

That al the peple of Grece / sholde speke
 How Creon was / of Theseus yserued
 As he þat hadde his deeth / ful wel disserued , 964
 And right anoon / with outen moore abood
 His baner he displayeth / and forth rood
 To Thebesward / and al his oost bisyde
 No neer Atthenes / wolde he go ne ryde 968
 Ne take his ese / fully half a day
 But onward in his wey / that nyght he lay
 And sente anoon / ypolita the queene
 And Emelye / hir yonge suster sheene 972
 Vn to the town of Atthenes / to dwelle
 And forth he ryt ther nys namoore to telle
 ¶ The rede statue of Mars / with spere and targe
 So shyneth / in his white Baner large 976
 That alle the feeldes / glitren vp and doun
 And by his Baner / born was his penoun
 Of gold ful ryche / in which ther was ybete
 The Mynotaur / which þat he wan in Crete 980
 ¶ Thus ryt this duc. thus ryt this conquerour
 And in his oost / of Chiualrye the flour
 Til þat he cam to Thebes / and alighte [leaf 14, back]
 ffaire in a feeld / ther as he thoghte fighte 984
 ¶ But shortly / for to speken of this thyng
 With Creon / which þat was of Thebes kyng
 He faught and slow hym manly / as a knyght
 In pleyn bataille / and putte the folk to flyght , 988
 And by assaut he wan the Citee after
 And rente adoun / bothe wal / and sparre / and rafter
 And to the ladyes / he restored agayn
 The bones / of hir freendes / þat were slayn 992
 To doon obsequies / as was tho the gyse
 But it weere al to long for to deuyse
 The grete clamour / and the waymentynge
 That the ladyes made / at the brennynge 996
 Of the bodies / and the grete honour

That Theseus / the noble Conquerour
 Dooth to the ladys / whan they from hym wente
 But shortly / for to telle is myn entente 1000
 ¶ Whan þat this worthy duc this Theseus
 Hath Creon slayn / and wonne Thebes thus
 Stille in that feeld / he took al nyght his reste
 And dide with al the / contree / as hym leste 1004
 ¶ To ransake in the taas / of bodies dede
 Hem for to strepe / of harneys / and of wede
 The pilours / diden bisynesse / and cure
 After the bataille / and disconfiture 1008
 And so bifel / in the taas they founde
 Thurgh girt with many a greuous bloody wownde
 Two yonge knyghtes / liggyng by and by
 Bothe in oon armes / wrought ful richely 1012
 Of whiche two / Arcita highte that oon
 And that oother knyght highte Palamon
 Nat fully quyk / ne fully deed they weere
 But by hir Cote armures / and by hir geere 1016
 The heraudes / knewe hem best in special
 As they þat weren / of the blood roial
 Of Thebes / and of sustren two yborn
 Out of the taas / the pilours han hem torn 1020
 And han hem caryed / softe vn to the tente
 Of Theseus / and he ful soone hem sente
 To Atthenes / to dwellen in prisoñ [leaf 15]
 Perpetuelly / he nolde no raunsoñ 1024
 ¶ And whan this worthy duc / hath thus ydoon
 He took his oost / and hom he ryt anoon
 With laurer corouned / as a conquerour
 And there he lyueth / in ioye / and in honour 1028
 Terme of his lyf / what nedeth wordes mo
 And in a tour / in angwissh and in wo
 Dwellen this Palamon / and eek Arcite
 ffor euere moore / ther may no gold hem quyte 1032
 ¶ This passeth yeer by yeer / and day by day

Til it fil ones / in a morwe of May
 That Emelye / þat fairer was to seene
 Than is the lilie / vp on his stalke greene 1036
 And fressher than the May / with floures newe
 ffor with the Rose colour stroof hir hewe
 I noot which was / the fairer of hem two
 Er it were day / as was hir wone to do 1040
 She was aysen / and al redy dight
 ifor May wol haue / no slogardye a nyght
 The seson pryketh / euery gentil herte
 And maketh it out of his sleep to sterte 1044
 And seith arys / and do thyn obseruance
 This maketh Emelye / haue remembrance
 To doon honour to May / and for to ryse
 Yclothed was she fressh / for to deuyse 1048
 Hir yelow heer / was broyded in a tresse
 Bihynde hir bak a yerde long I gesse
 And in the gardyn / at the sonne vp riste
 She walketh vp and down / and as hir liste 1052
 She gadreth floures / party white and rede
 To make a subtil gerland for hir hede
 And as an Aungel / heuenyssshly she soong
 ¶ The grete tour / þat was so thikke and strong 1056
 Which of the Castel / was the chief dongeon
 Ther as the knyghtes / weren in prison
 Of whiche I tolde yow / and tellen-shal
 Was euene ioynant / to the gardyn wal 1060
 Ther as this Emelye / hadde hir pley yng
 Bright was the sonne / and cleer / in that morn yng
 And Palamon / this woful prisoner (leaf 15, back)
 As was his wone / by leue of his Gailler 1064
 Was risen / and romed in a chambre an heigh
 In which / he al the noble Citee seigh
 And eek the gardyn / ful of braunches greene
 Ther as / the fresshe Emelye the sheene 1068
 Was in hir walk / and romed vp and down

This sorweful prisoner / this Palamon
 Gooth in the chambre / romyng to and fro
 And to hym self / compleynyng^t of his wo 1072
 That he was born / ful ofte he seyde allas
 And so bifel / by auenture / or cas
 That thurgh a wyndow / thikke of many a barre
 Of Iren greet^t and square as any sparre 1076
 He caste his eye / vp on Emelya
 And ther with al he bleynte / and cryde .A.
 As thogh / he stongen weere / vn to the herte
 ¶ And with that cry / Arcite anoon vp sterte 1080
 And seyde cosyn myn / what eyleth thee
 That art so pale / and deedly on to see
 Why cridestow / who hath thee doon offence
 ffor goddes loue / tak al in pacience 1084
 Oure prison / for it may noon oother be
 ffortune hath yeuen vs this aduersitee
 Som wikked aspect^t or disposicion
 Of Saturne / by som constellacion 1088
 Hath yeuen vs this / al thogh we hadde it sworn
 So stood the heuene / whan þat we were born
 We mote endure it^t this is the short and playn
 This Palamon answerde / and seyde agayn 1092
 ¶ Cosyn for sothe / of this opinioñ
 Thow hast^t a vayn ymaginacion
 This prison / caused me noght to crye
 But I was hurt right now / thurgh out myn Iye 1096
 In to myn herte / that wol my bane be
 The fairnesse / of that lady þat I se
 Yond in the gardyn / romen to and fro
 Is cause / of al my cryyng^t and my wo 1100
 I noot^t wher she be womman / or goddesse
 But Venus / is it soothly as I gesse
 And ther with al / on knees down he fil [leaf 16]
 And seyde / Venus if it be thy wil 1104
 Yow in this gardyn / thus to transfigure

Bifore me / sorweful wrecched creature
 Out of this prison / help þat we may scape
 And if so be / my destynnee be shape 1108
 By eterne word / to dyen in prison
 Of oure lynage / haue som compassion ✓
 That is so lowe ybroght by tirannye
 ¶ And with that word / Arcite gan espye 1112
 Where as this lady / romed to and fro
 And with that sighte / hir beautee hurte hym so
 That if þat Palamon / was wounded soore
 Arcite is hurt. as muche as he / or moore 1116
 And with a syk /. he seyde pitously
 The fresshe beautee / sleeth me sodeynly
 Of hire / þat rometh in the yonder place
 And but I haue / hir mercy / and hir grace 1120
 That I may seen hire / at the leeste weye
 I nam but deed / ther nys namoore to seye
 ¶ This Palamon / whan he tho wordes herde
 Despitously he loked / and answerde 1124
 Wheither seistow this / in earnest or in pley
 ¶ Nay quod Arcite / in earnest by my fey
 God help me so / me list ful yuele pleye
 This Palamon / gan knytte his browes tweye 1128
 ¶ It were to thee quod he / no greet honour
 ffor to be fals / ne for to be traytour
 To me / that am thy cosyn and thy brother
 Ysworn ful depe / and ech of vs til oother 1132
 That neuere / for to dyen in the payne
 Til þat the deeth / departe shal vs tweyne
 Neither of vs / in loue to hyndre oother
 Ne in noon oother caas / my leeue brother 1136
 But þat thow sholdest trewely forthre me
 In euery caas / and I shal forthren thee
 This was thyn ooth / as myn also certeyn
 I woot right wel / thow darst it nat withseyne 1140
 Thus artow of my conseil / out of doute

And now / thow woldest falsly been aboute
 To loue my lady / whom I loue and serue [leaf 16, back]
 And euere shal / til þat myn herte sterue 1144
 Now certes false Arcite / thow shalt nat so
 I loued hire first^t and tolde thee my wo
 As to my conseil / and my brother sworn
 To forthre me / as I haue told biforn 1148
 ffor which / thow art ybounden / as a knyght^t
 To helpe me / if it laye in thy myght^t
 Or ellis artow fals / I dar wel sayn
 This Arcite / ful proudly spak agayn 1152
 ¶ Thow shalt quod he / be rather fals than I.
 And thow art fals / I telle thee outrely
 ffor paramour / I loued hire first er thow
 What wiltow seyn / thow woost nat yet now 1156
 Wheither she be a womman / or goddesse
 Thyn is / affeccion of holynesse
 And myn is loue / as to a creature
 ffor which / I tolde thee myn auenture 1160
 As to my cosyn / and my brother sworn
 I pose / that thow louedest hire biforn
 Wostow nat wel / the olde clerkes sawe
 That who shal / yeue a louere any lawe // *Quis legem det amantibus.*
 Loue is a gretter lawe / by my pan
 Than may be yeue / to any erthely man
 And therfore / posityf lawe / and swich decree
 Is broke al day for loue / in ech degree 1168
 A man moot nedes loue / maugree his heed
 He may nat fleen it / thogh he sholde be deed
 Al be she mayde / wydwe / or ellis wyf
 And eek^t it is nat likly / al thy lyf^t 1172
 To stonden in hir *grace* / namoore shal .I.
 ffor wel thow woost^t thy self verrailly
 That thow and I / been dampned to prison
 Perpetuelly / vs gayneth no raunson 1176
 We stryue / as dide the houndes for the boon

They foghte alday / and yet hir part was noon
 Ther cam a kyte / whil þat they were so wrothe
 That bar away the boon / bitwix hem bothe 1180
 And therefore / at the kynges court my brother
 Ech man for hym self / ther is noon oother
 Loue if thee lest. for I loue / and ay shal [leaf 17]
 And soothly / leue brother this is al 1184
 Heere in this prison / moote we endure
 And euerich of vs / take his auenture
 ¶ Greet was the stryf / and long bitwix hem tweye
 If þat I hadde leyser for to seye 1188
 But to theeffect / it happed on a day
 To telle it yow / as shortly as I may
 A worthy duc. þat highte Parotheus
 That felawe was / vn to duc Theseus 1192
 Syn thilke day / þat they were children lyte
 Was come to Atthenes / his felawe to visite
 And for to pleye / as he was wont to do
 ffor in this world / he loued no man so 1196
 And he loued hym / as tendrely agayn
 So wel they loued / as olde bookes sayn
 That whan þat oon was deed / soothly to telle
 His felawe wente / and soghte hym down in helle 1200
 But of that storie / list me noight to write
 Duc Perotheus / loued wel Arcite
 And hadde hym knowe at Thebes / yeer oy yere
 And finally / at requeste and prayere 1204
 Of Perotheus / with outen any raunson
 Duc Theseus / hym leet out of prison
 ffrely to goon / wher þat hym liste ouer al
 In swich a gyse / as I yow tellen shal 1208
 This was the forward / pleyedly for tendite
 Bitwixe Theseus / and hym Arcite
 That if so weere þat Arcite weere yfounde
 Euere in his lyf / by day / or nyght or stounde 1212
 In any contree / of this Theseus

And he weere caught. it was acorded thus
 That with a swerd / he sholde lese his heed
 Ther nas noon oother / remedye ne reed 1216
 But taketh his leue / and homward he hym spedde
 Lat hym be war / his nekke lyth to wedde
 ¶ How greet a sorwe / suffreth now Arcite
 The deeth he feeleth / thurgh his herte smyte 1220
 He wepeth / wayleth / cryeth pitously
 To sleen hym self / he wayteth pryuely
 He seyde allas / the day þat I was born [leaf 17, back]
 Now is my prison / worse than biforn 1224
 Now is me shape / eternally to dwelle
 Noght in purgatorie / but in helle
 Allas / þat euere knew I Parotheus
 ffor ellis / hadde I dwelled with Theseus 1228
 Yfettred in his prison eueremo
 Thanne hadde I been in blisse / and nat in wo
 Oonly the sighte of hire / whom þat I serue
 Thogh þat I neuere / hir grace may disserue 1232
 Wolde haue suffised / right ynogh for me
 ¶ O deere cosyn / Palamon / quod he
 Thyn is the victorie / of this auenture
 fful blisfully in prison maystow dure 1236
 In prison ? / nay certes / but in paradys
 Wel hath ffortune / yturned thee / the dys
 That hast the sighte of hire / and I thabsence
 ffor possible is / syn thow hast hire presence 1240
 And art a knyght a worthy and an able
 That by som caas / syn ffortune is chaungeable
 Thow mayst to thy desir / som tyme atteyne
 But I / that am exiled and bareyne 1244
 Of alle grace / and in so greet despeyr
 That ther nys Erthe / water / fyr / ne Eyr
 Ne creature / that of hem maked is
 That may me helpe / or do confort in this 1248
 Wel oghte I sterue / in wanhope / and distresse

ffarwel my lyf / my lust and my gladnesse
 ¶ Allas why pleynten folk so / in commune
 On purueiance of god / or of ffortune 1252
 That yeueth hem ful ofte / in many a gyse
 Wel bettre / than they kan hem self deuyse
 ¶ Som man desireth / for to haue richesse
 That cause is ofte / of his moerdre / or gret siknesse 1256
 And som man wolde / out of his prison fayn
 That in his hous / is of his meynee slayn
 Infinite harmes / been in this matere
 We woot nat what thyng þat we prayen heere 1260
 We fare as he / þat dronke is as a Mous
 A dronke man woot wel / he hath an hous
 But he noot / which the righte wey is thider [leaf 18]
 And to a dronke man / the wey is slider 1264
 And certes / in this world / so faren we
 We seken faste / after felicitee
 But we goon wrong ful ofte trewely
 Thus may we seyn alle / and nameliche .I. 1268
 That wende / and hadde a greet opinion
 That if I myghte / scapen fro prison
 Thanne hadde I been in ioye / and parfit heele
 Ther now / I am exiled fro my wele 1272
 Syn þat / I may nat seen yow Emelie
 I nam but deed / ther nys no remedie
 ¶ Vp on that oother syde Palamon
 Whan þat he wiste / Arcite was agon 1276
 Swich sorwe he maketh / þat the grete tour
 Resowneth / of his yowlyng and clamour
 The pure fettres / of his shynes grete
 Were / of his bittre salte teeris wete 1280
 Allas quod he / Arcita cosyn myn
 Of al oure stryf / god woot the fruyt is thyn
 Thow walkest now / in Thebes at thy large
 And of my wo / thow yeuest litel charge 1284
 Thow mayst thow hast wisdom / and manhede

Assemblen / al the folk^t of oure kynrede
 And make a werre / so sharp / on this Citee
 That by som auenture / or som trettee 1288
 Thow mayst haue hire / to lady and to wyf
 ffor whom / þat I moste nedes lese my lyf
 ffor as by wey / of possibilitee
 Sith thow art^t at thy large / of prison free 1292
 And art a lord / greet is thyn auantage
 Moore than is myn / that sterue here in a cage
 ffor I moot wepe / and waille whil I lyue
 With al the wo / þat prison may me yeue 1296
 And eek *with* peyne / þat loue me yeueth also
 That doubleth / al my torment^t and my wo
 Ther with / the fyr of Ialousie vp sterte
 With Inne his brest^t and hente hym by the herte 1300
 So woodly / þat he lyk was to byholde
 The Boxtree / or the Asshen dede / and colde
 ¶ Thanne seyde he / o crewel goddes / þat gouerne [leaf 18, back]
 This world / with byndyng^t of youre word eterne 1304
 And writen / in the table of Atthamañt
 Yourre parlement /. and youre eterne grañt^t
 What is man kynde / moore vn to yow holde
 Than is the sheepe / þat rowketh in the folde 1308
 ffor slayn is man / right as another beest^t
 And dwelleth eek^t in prison and arrest^t
 And hath siknesse / and greet aduersitee
 And ofte tymes / giltles pardee 1312
 ¶ What gouernance / is in this prescience
 That giltles / tormenteth Innocence
 And yet^t encreeceth this / al my penance
 That man is bounden / to his obseruance 1316
 ffor goddes sake / to letten of his wille
 Ther as a beest^t may al his lust fulfille
 And whan a beest is deed / it hath no peyne
 But man after his deeth / moot wepe and pleyne 1320
 Thogh in this world / he haue care and wo

With outen doute / it moot stonden so
 The answer of this / lete I to diuynys
 But wel I woot^t þat in this world / greet pyne is 1324
 ¶ Allas / I se a serpent^t or a theef^t
 That many a trewe man / hath doon mescheef^t
 Goon at his large / and where hym lust may turne
 But I moot been in prison / thurgh Saturne 1328
 And eek thurgh Juno / Ialous / and eek wood
 That hath destroyed / wel neigh al the blood
 Of Thebes / with his waste walles wyde
 And Venus / sleeth me / on that oother syde 1332
 ffor Ialousie / and feere / of hym Arcite
 ¶ Now wol I stynte / of Palamon alite
 And lete hym / in his prisonⁿ stille dwelle
 And of Arcite / forth I wol yow telle 1336
 ¶ The Somer / and the nyghtes longe
 Encreecen / double wise / the peynes stronge
 Bothe of the louere / and the prisoner
 I noot^t which hath / the sorwefuller myster 1340
 ffor soothly for to seyn / this Palamon
 Perpetuely / is dampned to prisonⁿ
 In cheynes / and in fettres / to been deed [leaf 19]
 And Arcite / is exiled / vp on his heed 1344
 ffor euere mo / as out of that contree
 Ne neueremo / ne shal his lady see
 ¶ Yow lueris / axe I now / this questionⁿ
 Who hath the worse / Arcite / or Palamon 1348
 That oon may seen his lady / day by day
 But in prisonⁿ / moot he dwelle alwey
 That oother where hym list^t may ride or go
 But seen his lady / shal he neuere mo 1352
 Now demeth as yow list^t ye þat kan
 ffor I wol telle forth / as .I. bigan

¶ Whan þat Arcite / to Thebes comen was
 fful ofte a day / he swelte / and seyde allas 1356
 ffor seen his lady / shal he neuere mo
 And shortly / to concluden al his wo
 So muchel sorwe / hadde neuere creature
 That is or shal / whil þat the world may dure 1360
 ¶ His sleepe / his mete / his drynke / is hym biraft
 That leene he weex / and drye as is a shaft
 Hise eyen holwe / and grisly to biholde
 His hewe falow / and pale as asshen colde 1364
 And solitarie he was / and euere alloone
 And waillynge al the nyght. makynge his moone
 And if he herde / soong^t or Instrument^t
 Thanne wolde he wepe / he myghte nat be stent^t 1368
 So feble eek were his spiritz / and so lowe
 And chaunged so / þat no man koude knowe
 His speche / nor his voys / thogh men it herde
 And in his gere / for al the world he ferde 1372
 Nat oonly / lyk the louteris maladye
 Of Hereos / but rather lyk Manye Mania
 Engendred / of humour malencolyk^t
 Biforn his Celle fantastyk^t 1376
 And shortly / turned was / al vp so down
 Bothe habit^t and eek disposicioun
 Of hym / this woful louere daun Arcite
 ¶ What sholde I al day / of his wo endite 1380
 Whanne he endured hadde / a yeer / or two
 This cruel torment^t and this peyne and wo
 At Thebes in his contree / as I seyde [leaf 19, back]
 Vp on a nyght^t in sleep / as he hym leyde 1384
 Hym thoughte / how þat the wynged god *Mercurye*
 Biforn hym stood / and bad hym to be murye
 His slepy yerde / in honde he bar vp righte
 An hat he wered / vp on his herys brighte 1388

Arrayed was this god / as he took keepe
 As he was / whan þat Argus took his sleepe
 And seyde hym thus / to Atthenes shaltow wende
 Ther is thee shapen / of thy wo an ende 1392
 ¶ And with that word / Arcite wook and sterte
 Now trewely / how sore þat me smerte
 Quod he / to Atthenes right now wol I fare
 Ne for the drede of deeth / shal I nat spare 1396
 To se my lady / þat I loue and serue
 In hir presence / I recche nat to sterue
 ¶ And with that word / he caughte a greet Mirour
 And saugh / þat chaunged was al his colour 1400
 And saugh his visage / al in another kynde
 And right anoon / it ran hym in his mynde
 That sith his face / was so disfigured
 Of maladie / the which he hadde endured 1404
 He myghte wel / if þat he bar hym lowe
 Lyue in Atthenes / eueremoore vnknowe
 And seen his lady / wel ny / day by day
 And right anoon / he chaunged his array 1408
 And cladde hym / as a poure laborer
 And al allone / saue oonly a Squyer
 That knew his pryuetee / and al his cas
 Which was disgised / pourely as he was 1412
 To Atthenes / is he goon / the nexte way
 And to the Court he wente vp on a day
 And at the gate / he profreth his seruyse
 To drugge and drawe / what so men wol deuyse 1416
 ¶ And shortly / of this matere / for to seyn
 He fil in office / with a Chambreleyn
 The which / þat dwellyng was with Emelye
 ffor he was wys / and koude soone espye 1420
 Of euery seruant which þat serueth here
 Wel koude he / hewen wode / and water bere
 ffor he was yong^t. and myghty for the nones [leaf 20]
 And ther to / he was strong^t and byg^t of bones 1424

To doon / what any wight kan hym deuyse
 A yeer / or two / he was in this seruyse
 Page of the chambre / of Emelie the brighte
 And Philostrate / he seyde þat he highte 1428
 ¶ But half so wel biloued a man / as he
 Ne was ther neuere in Court of his degree
 He was so gentil / of condicion
 That thurgh out al the Court was his renon 1432
 They seiden / þat it were a charitee
 That Theseus / wolde enhauncen his degree
 And putten hym / in worshipful seruyse
 Ther as he myghte / his vertu excercise 1436
 And thus with Inne a while / his name is spronge
 Bothe of his dedes / and his goode tonge
 That Theseus / hath taken hym so ner
 That of his chambre / he made hym a Squier 1440
 And gaf hym gold / to mayntene his degree
 And eek men broghte hym / out of his contree
 firo yeer to yeer / ful pryuely his rente
 But honestly / and sleighly / he it spente 1444
 That no man wondred / how þat he it hadde
 And thre yeer in this wise / his lyf he ladde
 And bar hym so / in pees / and ek in werre
 Ther was no man / that Theseus hath derre 1448
 And in this blisse / lete I now Arcite
 And speke I wole / of Palamon alite
 ¶ In derknesse / and horrible / and strong^t prison
 This seuen yeer / hath seten Palamon 1452
 fforpynd / what for wo / and for distresse
 Who feeleth / double soor / and heuynesse
 But Palamon / that loue destreyneth so
 That wood out of his wit he gooth for wo 1456
 And eek ther to / he is a prisoner
 Perpetuelly / nat oonly for a yer
 Who koude ryme / in englissh proprely
 His martirdom / for sothe it am noht I 1460

Ther fore I passe / as lightly / as I may
 ¶ It fil / þat / in that Seuenthe yeer of May
 The thridde nyght^t. as olde bokes seyn [leaf 20, back]
 That al this storie / tellen moore pleyn 1464
 Were it by auenture / or destyne
 As whan a thyng is shapen / it shal be
 That soone after the mydnyght^t Palamon
 By helpyng of a freend / brak his prison 1468
 And fleeth the Citee / faste as he may go
 ffor he hadde yeue / his Gailler drynke so
 Of a Clarree / maad of certeyn wyn 1471
 With Nercotikes / and opye / of Thebes fyn // *Opium Thebaicum.*
 That al that nyght^t. thogh þat men wolde hym shake
 The Gailler sleepe / he myghte noght awake
 ¶ And thus he fleeth / as faste as euere he may
 The nyght was short^t and faste by the day 1476
 That nedes cost^t he moste hym seluen hyde
 And til a groue / faste ther bisyde
 With dredful foot^t thanne stalketh Palamon
 ffor shortly / this was his opynyon 1480
 That in that groue / he wolde hym hyde al day
 And in the nyght^t thanne wolde he take his way
 To Thebesward / his freendes for to preye
 On Theseus / to helpe hym to werreye 1484
 And shortly / outhur he wolde lese his lyf^t
 Or wynnen Emelie / vn to his wyf
 This is theeffect^t and his entente pleyn
 ¶ Now wol I turne / to Arcite ageyn 1488
 That litel wiste / how neigh þat was his care
 Til þat ffortune / hadde broght hym / in the snare
 ¶ The bisy larke / messenger of day
 Salueth in hir song^t the morwe gray 1492
 And fry Phebus / riseth vp so brighte
 That al the Orient^t. laugheth of the lighte
 And *wit*h his stremes / dryeth in the greues
 The siluer drops / hangynge on the leues 1496

And Arcita / that in the Court roial
 With Theseus / Squyer principal
 Is risen / and looketh on the murye day
 And for to doon / his obseruance to May 1500
 Remembrynge / on the point of his desir
 He on a Courser / startlynge as the fir
 Is riden in to the felde / hym to pleye [leaf 21]
 Out of the Court. were it a myle / or tweye 1504
 And to the groue / of which þat I yow tolde
 By auenture / his wey he gan to holde
 To maken hym / a gerland of the greues
 Were it of wodebynde / or hawethorn leues 1508
 And loude he soongt. ayein the sonne shene
 May / with alle thy floures / and thy grene
 Wel come be thou / faire fresshe May
 In hope / þat I som grene gete may 1512
 And from his courser / with a lusty herte
 In to the groue / ful hastily he sterte
 And in a path / he rometh vp and down
 Ther as by auenture / this Palamon 1516
 Was in a bussȝ / þat no man myghte hym se
 ffor soore afered / of his deeth was he
 No thyng knew he / þat it was Arcite
 God woot he wolde haue trowed it ful lite 1520
 But sooth is seyð / go sithen many yeris
 That feeld hath eyen / and the wode hath erys
 It is ful fair / a man to bere hym euene
 ffor alday meeten men / at vnset steuene 1524
 fful litel woot Arcite / of his felawe,
 That was so neigh / to herknen al his sawe
 ffor in the bussȝ / he sitteth now ful stille
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite / hadde romed al his fille 1528
 And songen al the roundel lustily
 In to a studie / he fil sodeynly
 As doon thise louerys / in hir queynte gerys
 Now in the croppe / now down in the brerys 1532

Now vp / now down / as boket in a welle
 Right as the friday / soothly for to telle
 Now it shyneth / now it reyneth faste
 Right^t so / kan gery Venus ouercaste 1536
 The hertes of hir folk^t. right as hir day
 Is gerful / right so chaungeth she array
 Selde is the friday / al the wike ylike
 ¶ Whan þat Arcite hadde songe / he gan to syke 1540
 And sette hym down / with outen any moore
 Allas quod he / that day / þat I was bore
 How longe Iuno / thurgh thy crueltee [leaf 21, back]
 Woltow werreyen / Thebes the Citee 1544
 Allas / ybrought is to confusion
 The blood roial / of Cadme and Amphion
 ¶ Cadmus / which þat was the firste man
 That Thebes bulte / and first bigan 1548
 And of the Citee / first was crowned kyng^t
 Of his lynage am I / and his of-spryng^t
 By verray ligne / as of the stok roial
 And now I am / so caytyf and so thral 1552
 That he þat is / my mortal enemy
 I serue hym / as his Squyer pourely
 And yet dooth Iuno / me wel moore shame
 ffor I dar noght^t biknowe myn owen name 1556
 But ther as I was wont^t to highte Arcite
 Now highte I Philostrate / noght worth a myte
 ¶ Allas thow felle Mars / allas Juno
 Thus hath youre Ire / oure lynage al fordo 1560
 Saue oonly me / and wrecchid Palamon
 That Theseus / martireth in prison
 And ouer al this / to sleen me outrelly
 Loue hath his firy dart^t so brennyngly 1564
 Ystiked / thurgh my trewe careful herte
 That shapen was my deeth / erst than my sherte
 Ye sleen me with youre eyen / Emelye
 Ye been the cause / wherfore þat .I. dye 1568

Of al the remenant' of myn oother care
 Ne sette I noght'. the mountaunce of a tare
 So þat I koude doon aught'. to youre plesaunce
 And with that word / he fil down in a traunce 1572
 A longe tyme / and afterward he vp sterte
 ¶ This Palamon / that thoughte / þat thurgh his herte
 He felte a coold swerd / sodeynly glyde
 ffor Ire he quook'. no lenger wolde he byde 1576
 And whan þat he had herd / Arcites tale
 As he were wood / with face deed and pale
 He stirte hym vp / out of the buskes thikke
 And seyde Arcite / false traytour wikke 1580
 Now artow hent' that louest my lady so
 ffor whom þat I haue / al this peyne and wo
 And art my blood / and to my conseil sworn [leaf 22]
 As I ful ofte / haue toold thee her biforn 1584
 And hast byiaped here / due Theseus
 And falsly / chaunged hast thy name thus
 I wol be deed / or ellis thow shalt dye
 Thow shalt' noght / loue my lady Emelye 1588
 But I wol loue hire oonly / and namo
 ffor I am Palamon / thy mortal foo
 And thogh þat I / no wepne haue in this place
 But out of prison / am astert by grace 1592
 I drede noght' þat outhur thow shalt dye
 Or thow ne shalt' noght louen Emelye
 Chees which thow wolt' or thow shalt' noght asterte
 ¶ This Arcite / with ful despitous herte 1596
 Whan he hym knew / and hadde his tale herd
 As fiers as leon' / pulled out his swerd
 And seyde thus / by god þat sitteth aboue
 Nere it þat thow art syk' and wood for loue 1600
 And eek' þat thow / no wepne hast in this place
 Thow sholdest neuere / out of this groue pace
 That thow ne sholdest' dyen of myn hond
 ffor I diffye / the seuretee and the bond 1604

Which þat thow seist þat I haue maad to thee
 What verray fool / thynk wel þat loue is free!
 And I wol loue hire / maugree al thy myght
 ¶ But for as muche / as thow art a worthy knyght 1608
 And wilnest to darreyne hire by bataille
 Haue here my trouthe / tomorwe I nyl nat faille
 With outen wityng of any oother wight
 That here / I wol be founden / as a knyght 1612
 And bryngen harneys / right ynogh for thee
 And chees the beste / and leef the worste to me
 And mete and drynke / this nyght wol I brynge
 Ynogh for thee / and clothes for thy beddyng 1616
 And if so be / þat thow my lady wynne
 And sle me in this wode / ther I am Inne
 Thow mayst wel haue thy lady / as for me
 ¶ This Palamon answerde / I graunte it thee 1620
 And thus they been departed / til amorwe
 Whan ech of hem / hadde leyd his feith to borwe
 O Cupide / out of alle charitee [leaf 22, back]
 O regne / that wolde no felawe haue to thee 1624
 fful sooth is seyde / þat loue ne lordshipe
 Wol noght his thankes / haue no felaweshipe
 Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamon
 ¶ Arcite / is riden anon / vn to the town 1628
 And on the morwe / er it were dayes lyght
 fful priuely / two harneys hath he dyght
 Bothe suffisaunt and mete to darreyne
 The bataille in the feeld / bitwix hem tweyne 1632
 And on his hors / allone / as he was born
 He carieth al this harneys / hym biforn
 And in the groue / at tyme and place yset
 This Arcite / and this Palamon been met 1636
 ¶ To chaungen / gan the colour in hir face
 Right as the huntys / in the regne of Trace
 That stonden at the gappe / with a spere
 Whanne hunted is / the leon or the Bere 1640

And hereth hym / come russlynge in the greues
 And breketh / bothe bowes / and the leues
 And thynketh / here cometh my mortal enemy
 With oute faille / he moot be deed / or .I. 1644
 ffor outhur / I moot sleen hym / at the gappe
 Or he moot sle me / if þat me myshappe
 So ferden they / in chaungyng^t of hir hewe
 As fer / as euerich / oother of hem knewe 1648
 ¶ Ther nas no good day / ne no saluyng
 But streight^t with ouden word / or rehersyng
 Euerich of hem / heelp for to armen oother
 As frendly / as he weere / his owene brother 1652
 And after that / with sharpe speres stronge
 They foynen / ech at oother / wonder longe
 Thou myghtest wene / þat this Palamon
 In his fightyng were a wood leon 1656
 And as a crewel Tygre / was Arcite
 As wilde boores / gonnen they to smyte
 That frothen / whit as foom / for Ire wood
 Vp to the Anclees / foghte they in hir blood 1660
 And in this wise / I lete hem fightyng dwelle
 And forth I wole / of Theseus yow telle
 ¶ The destyne / Ministre general [leaf 23] 1664
 That executeth / in the world ouer al
 The purueiance / that god hath seyn biforn
 So stroong^t it is / þat thogh the world hadde sworn
 The contrarie of a thyng^t by ye / or nay
 Yet som tyme / it shal fallen on a day 1668
 That falleth nat eft / with Inne a thousand yeer
 ffor *certainly* / oure appetites heer
 Be it of werre / or pees / or hate / or loue
 Al is this ruled / by the sighte aboue 1672
 ¶ This mene I now / by myghty Theseus
 That for to hunten / is so desirus
 And namely / at the grete hert in May
 That in his bed / ther daweth hym no day 1676

That he nys clad / and redy for to ryde
 With hunte and horn / and houndes hym bisyde
 ffor in his huntynge hath he swich delit
 That it is / al his ioye and appetit 1680
 To been hym self / the grete hertes bane
 ffor after Mars / he serueth now Diane
 ¶ Cleer was the day / as I haue told er this
 And Theseus / with alle ioye and blys
 With his ypolita / the faire queene
 And Emelie / clothed al in greene
 On huntynge be they riden roially
 And to the groue / that stood ful faste by 1688
 In which ther was an hert as men hym tolde
 Duc Theseus / the streighte wey hath holde
 And to the launde / he rideth hym ful right
 ffor thider was the hert wont haue his flight 1692
 And ouer a brook / and so forth on his weye
 This duc wol han a cours at hym / or tweye
 With houndes swiche / as þat hym list comaunde
 And whan this duc. was come vn to the launde 1696
 Vnder the sonne he looketh / and anon
 He was war / of Arcite and Palamon
 That foghten breme as it were boles two
 The brighte swerdes / wenten to and fro 1700
 So hidously / that with the leeste strook
 It semed / as it wolde felle an ook
 But what they weere / no thyng he ne woot [leaf 23, back]
 This duc his courser / with the spores smoot 1704
 And at a stert he was bitwix hem two
 And pulled out a swerd / and cryed Hoo
 Namooore / vp on peyne / of lesyng of youre heed
 By myghty Mars / he shal anon be deed 1708
 That smyteth any strook / þat I may seen
 But telleth me / what myster men ye been
 That been so hardy / for to fighten heer
 With outen Iuge / or oother officer 1712

As it weere in a lystes roially

¶ This Palamon / answerde hastily

And seyde / sire / what nedeth wordes mo

We haue the deeth disserued / bothe two 1716

Two woful wrecches been we / two caytyues

That been encombred / of oure owene lyues

And as thow art a rightful lord and Iuge

Ne yif vs / neither mercy ne refuge 1720

But slee me first. for seinte charitee

But slee my felawe eek / as wel as me

Or slee hym first. for thogh thow knowe it lite

This is thy mortal foo / this is Arcite 1724

That fro thy lond / is banysshed on his heed

ffor which / he hath deserued to be deed

ffor this is he / þat cam vn to thy yate

And seyde / þat he highte Philostrate 1728

Thus hath he iaped thee / ful many a yeer

And thow. hast maked hym / thy chief Squyer

And this is he / þat loueth Emelye

ffor sith the day is come / þat I shal dye 1732

I make pleynty / my confession

That I am / thilke woful Palamon

That hath thy prison / broken wikkedly

I am thy mortal foo / and it am I 1736

That loueth so hoote / Emelye the brighte

That I wol dyen / present in hir sighte

Wherfore I axe deeth / and my Iuise

But slee my felawe / in the same wise 1740

ffor bothe haue we / deserued to be slayn

¶ This worthy duc answerde anon agayn

And seyde / this is a short conclusion [leaf 24]

Youre owene mout / by youre confession 1744

Hath dampned yow / and I wol it recorde

It nedeth noght to pyne yow with the corde

Ye shul be deed / by myghty Mars the rede

¶ The queene anon / for verray wommanhede 1748

Gan for to wepe / and so dide Emelye
 And alle the ladies / in the compaignye
 Greet pitee was it / as it thoughte hem alle
 That euere swich a chaunce / sholde falle 1752
 ffor gentil men they weere / of greet estaat
 And no thyng but for loue / was this debaat
 And sawe / hir bloddy wowndes / wide and soore
 And alle cryden / bothe lasse and moore 1756
 Haue mercy lord / vp on vs wommen alle
 And on hir bare knees / adown they falle
 And wolde haue kist his feet ther as he stood
 Til at the laste / aslaked was his mood 1760
 ffor pitee / renneth soone in gentil herte
 And thogh he first for Ire quook and sterte
 He hath considred / shortly in a clause
 The trespas of hem bothe / and eek the cause 1764
 And al thogh þat his Ire / hir gilt accused
 Yet in his reson / he hem bothe excused
 ¶ As thus / he thoghte wel þat euery man
 Wol helpe hym self in loue / if þat he kan 1768
 And eek / deliuere hym self / out of prison
 And eek / his herte hadde compassion
 Of wommen / for they wepten euere in oon
 And in his gentil herte / he thoghte anoon 1772
 And softe vn to hym / self he seyde fy
 Vp on a lord / that wol haue no mercy ¶ nota
 But be a leon / bothe in word / and dede
 To hem / that been in repentaunce and drede 1776
 As wel / as to a proud despitous man
 That wol mayntene / that he first bigan
 That lord / hath litel of discrecion
 That in swich caas / kan no dyuysion 1780
 But weyeth pryde / and humblesse / after oon
 And shortly / whan his Ire is thus agoon
 He gan to loken vp / with eyen lighte [leaf 24, back]
 And spak thise same wordes / al on highte 1784

And ye shal bothe anoon / vn to me swere
 That neuere mo / ye shal my contree dere
 Ne make werre vp on me / nyght nor day [leaf 25]
 But been my freendes / in al that ye may 1824
 I yow foryeue / this trespass euerydel
 And they hym sworn / his axing faire and wel
 And hym of lordshipe / and of mercy preyde
 And he hem graunteth *grace* / and thanne he seyde 1828
 ¶ To speke of roial lynage / and richesse
 Thogh þat she weere a queene / or a princesse
 Ech of yow bothe / is worthy doutelees
 To wedden whan tyme is / but nathelees 1832
 I speke / as for my suster Emelye
 ffor whom / ye haue this stryf and Ialousye
 Ye woot your self. she may nat wedden two
 Atones / thogh ye fighten eueremo 1836
 That oon of yow / al be hym looth / or lief
 He moot go pipen / in an yuy leef
 This is to seyn / she may nat now haue bothe
 Al be ye nevere so Ialous / ne so wrothe 1840
 And for thy / I yow putte in this degree
 That ech of yow / shal haue his destyne
 As hym is shape / and herkneth in what wyse
 Lo here youre ende / of that I shal deuyse 1844
 ¶ My wyl is this / for plat conclusion
 With outen any replicacion
 If that yow liketh / take it for the beste
 That euerich of yow / shal goon where hym leste 1848
 ffrelly / with outen raunson / or daunger
 And this day fifty wykes / fer ne neer
 Euerich of yow / shal brynge an hundred knyghtes
 Armed for listes / vp at alle rightes 1852
 Al redy / to darreyne hire by bataille
 And this bihoote I yow / with outen faille
 Vp on my trouthe / and as I am a knyght
 That wheither of yow bothe / þat hath myght 1856

This is to seyn / þat wheither he or thou
 May with his hundred / as I spak of now
 Sleen his contrarie / or out of lystes dryue
 Thanne shal I yeue / Emelye to wyue 1860
 To whom þat ffortune / yeueth so fair a *grace*
 The lystes / shal I maken in this place
 And god so wisly / on my soule rewe [leaf 25, back]
 As I shal / euene Iuge been and trewe 1864
 Ye shul noon oother ende / with me maken
 That oon of yow ne / shall be deed / or taken
 And if yow thynketh / this is well ysayd
 Sey youre ays / and holdeth yow apayd 1868
 This is youre ende / and youre conclusion
 ¶ Who looketh lightly now / but Palamon
 Who spryngeth vp for ioie / but Arcite
 Who koude telle / or who koude it endite 1872
 The ioie / that is maked in the place
 Whan Theseus / hath doon so fair a *grace*
 But doun on knees / wente euery maner wight
 And thonken hym / with al hir herte and myght 1876
 And namely the Thebans ofte sythe
 And thus with good hope / and herte blythe
 They take hir leue / and homward gonne they ryde
 To Thebes / with olde walles wyde 1880

Explicit prima pars

Incipit pars secunda 𐀚

I trowe / men wolde deme it negligence
 If I foryete / to tellen the despence
 Of Theseus / that gooth so bisily
 To maken vp the lystes / roially 1884
 That swich a noble Theatre / as it was
 I dar wel seyn / in this world ther nas
 The circuit a myle was aboute
 Walled of stoon / and dyched al with oute 1888
 Round was the shape / in manere of compas

fful of degrees / the heighte of sixty paas
 That whan a man / was set' on o degree
 He letted noght' his felawe for to see 1892
 ¶ Estward ther stood a gate / of Marbul whit
 Westward / right swich another / in the oposit'
 And shortly to concluden / swich a place
 Was noon in erthe / as in so lite a space 1896
 ffor in the lond / ther was no crafty man [leaf 26]
 That Geometrye / or Ars metrik kan
 Ne purtreyour / ne keruere of ymages
 That Theseus / ne yaf mete and wages 1900
 The Theatre / for to maken and deuyse
 And for to doon / his ryte and sacrificse
 He Estward hath / vp on the gate aboue
 In worship of venus / goddesse of loue 1904
 Doon maad an Auter / and an oratorie
 And on the westward / in memorie
 Of Mars / he maketh hath right swich another
 That coste largely / of gold a fother 1908
 And Northward / in a touret' on the wal
 Of Alabastre whit' and reed Coral
 An oratorie / riche for to see
 In worshiþe / of Diane of chastitee ✓ 1912
 Hath Theseus / doon wrought' in noble Wise
 ¶ But yet hadde I forgeten / to deuyse
 The noble keruyng / and the purtreitures
 The shape / the contenance / and the figures 1916
 That weren / in thise oratories thre
 ¶ ffirst / in the temple of Venus / maystow se
 Wroght on the wal / ful pitous to biholde
 The broken slepes / and the sykes colde 1920
 The sacred teerys / and the waymentynge
 The firy strokes / of the desiryng
 That loues seruantz / in this lyf enduren
 The othes / that hir couenantz assuren 1924
 Plesance / and hope / desir / foolhardynesse

Beautee and youthe / baudrye / richesse	
Charmes and force / lesynges / flaterye	
Despense / bisynesse / and Ialousye	1928
That wered / of yelowē gooldes a gerland	
And a Cokkow / sittynge on hir hand	
ffestes / Instrumentz / caroles / daunces	
Lust and array / and alle the circumstaunces	1932
Of loue / whiche þat I rekned / and rekne shal	
By ordre / weren peynted on the wal	
And mo than / I kan make of mencion	
ffor soothly / al the Mount of Citheron	1936
Ther Venus / hath hir p ^r incipal dwellynge	[leaf 26, back]
Was shewed on the wal / in purtreyyng	
With al the gardyn / and the lustynesse	
Nat was foryeten / the porter ydelnesse	1940
Ne Narcisus the faire / of yoore agon	
Ne yet / the folie / of kyng Salomon	
Ne yet the grete strengthe of Ercules	
Thenchantementz / of Medea and Circes	1944
Ne of Turnus / with the hardy fiers corage	
The ryche Cresus / caytif in seruage	
¶ Thus may ye seen / þat wisdom ne richesse	
Beautee / ne sleight / strengthe hardynesse	1948
Ne may with Venus / maken champartie	
ffor as hir lust the world than may she gye	
Lo all this folk / so caught were in hir laas	
Til they for wo / ful ofte seyde alas	1952
Suffiseth heere ensamples / oon or two	
And though / I koude rekne a thousand mo	
¶ The statue of Venus / glorious for to see ^{ad vid}	
Was naked / fletyng ^{i. mare} in the large See	1956
And fro the nauele down / al couered was	
With wawes grene / and brighte as any glas	
A Citole in hir right hand / hadde she	
And on hir heed / ful semely for to se	1960
A rose gerland / fressh / and wel smellynge	

About hir heed / hir dowues flikerynge	
Biforn hire stood / hir sone Cupido	
Vp on his shuldres / wynges hadde he two	1964
And blynd he was / as it is ofte seene	
A bowe he bar / and Arwes brighte and keene	
¶ Why sholde I nat as wel / eek telle yow al	
The purtreiture / þat was vp on the wal	1968
With Inne the temple / of myghty Mars the rede	
Al peynted was the wal / in lengthe and brede	
Lyk to the eestres / of the grisly place	
That highte the grete temple / of Mars in Trace	1972
In thilke colde / frosty Region	
Ther as Mars / hath his souereyn mansion	
¶ first on the wal / was peynted a fforest	
In which ther dwelleth / neither man ne best	1976
With knotty / knarry / bareyne trees olde	[leaf 27]
Of stubbes sharpe / and hidouse to biholde	
In which / ther ran a rombul / in a swough	
As thogh a storm / sholde bresten euery bough	1980
And downward on an hil / vnder a bente	
Ther stood the temple / of Mars armypotente.	
Wroght al of burned steel / of which the entree	
Was long and streyt and gastly for to see	1984
And ther out cam a rage / and swich a veze	^{.i. impetus}
That it made / al the gate for to rese	
The Northren light in at the dores shoon	
ffor wyndow on the wal / ne was ther noon	1988
Thurgh which men myghten / any light discerne	
The dore was al / of Athamant eterne	
Yclenched / ouerthwart and endelong	
With Iren togh / and for to make it strong	1992
Euery piler / the temple to sustene	
Was tonne greet of Iren bright and shene	
¶ Ther say I first. the dirke ymagynyng	
Of felonye / and al the compassyng	1996
The cruel Ire / reed as any gleede	

The pike purs / and eek the pale drede
 The smylere / with the knyf vnder the cloke
 The shipne brennyng / with the blake smoke 2000
 The treson / of the mordryng in the bed
 The open werre / with woundes al bibled
 Contek / with bloody knyf and sharpe manace
 Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place 2004
 ¶ The sleere of hym self / yet saugh I ther
 His herte blood / hath bathed al his heer
 The nayl ydryuen / in the shode a nyght
 The colde deeth / with mouth gapyng vp right 2008
 Amyddes of the temple / sat meschaunce
 With discomfort and sory contenaunce
 ¶ Yet saugh I woodnesse / laughyng in his rage
 Armed compleynt out hees / and fiers outrage 2012
 The caroyne in the buss / with throte yeorue
 A thousand slayn / and noght of qualm ystorue
 The tiraunt with the praye / by force yraft
 The town destroyed / ther was no thyng laft 2016
 ¶ Yet saugh I brent. the shippes hoppesteres [leaf 27, back]
 The hunte strangled / with the wilde beres
 The sowe freten the child / right in the Cradel
 The Cook yscalded / for al his longe ladel 2020
 ¶ Naught was forgeten / by the Infortune of Marte
 The Cartere / ouer ryden / with his Carte
 Vnder the wheel / ful lowe he lay adown
 Ther were also / of Martes deuysioun 2024
 The Barbour / and the Bochier and the Smyth
 That forgeth sharpe swerdes / on his styth
 ¶ And al aboue / depeynted in a tour
 Saugh I Conquest sitting in greet honour 2028
 With the sharpe swerd / ouer his heed
 Hangynge / by a subtil twynes threed
 ¶ Depeynted was / the slaghtre of Iulius
 Of grete Nero / and of Anthonius 2032
 Al be / þat thilke tyme / they were vnborn

Yet was hir deeth / depeynted ther biforn
 By manacynge of Mars / right by figure
 So was it shewed / in that purtreiture 2036
 As is depeynted / in the Sertres aboute
 Who shal be slayn / or ellis deed for loue
 Suffiseth oon ensample / in stories olde
 I may nat rekne hem alle / thogh I wolde 2040
 ¶ The Statue of Mars / vp on a Carte stood
 Armed / and loked grym / as he were wood
 And ouer his heed / ther shynen two figures
 Of sterres / þat been clepyd in Scriptures 2044
 That oon Puella / that oother Rubeus
 This god of armes / was arrayed thus
 A wolf ther stood / bifore hym at his feet
 With eyen rede / and of a man he eet 2048
 With subtil pencil / was depeynted this storie
 In redoutynge of Mars / and of his glorie
 ¶ Now to the temple / of Diane the chaste
 As shortly as I kan / I wol me haste 2052
 To telle yow / al the discripsioun
 Depeynted been the walles / vp and doun
 Of huntynge and of shamefast chastitee
 Ther saw .I. / how woful Calistopee 2056
 Whan þat Diane / agreued was with here [leaf 28]
 Was turned / fro a womman / til a Bere
 And after was she maad / the lode sterre // Vrsa maior
 Thus was it peynted / I kan seye yow no ferre 2060
 Hir sone is eek a sterre / as men may see
 Ther saw I Dane / yturned to a tree
 I mene nat / the goddesse diane
 But Penneus doghter / which þat highte Dane 2064
 ¶ Ther saw I Attheon / an hert ymaked
 ffor vengeance / þat he saw Diane al naked
 I seigh / how þat hise houndes haue hym caught
 And freten hym / for þat they knewe hym naught 2068
 ¶ Yet peynted was / a litel ferther moor

How Atthalante / hunted the wilde boor
 And Meleagree / and many another mo
 ffor which Diane / wroghte hym care and wo 2072
 Ther saw .I. many another wonder storie
 The whiche / me list nat drawn to memorie
 ¶ This goddesse on hert^t ful hye seet^t
 With smale houndes / al aboute hir feet^t 2076
 And vnder nethe hir feet^t. she hadde a moone
 Wexinge it was / and sholde wanye soone
 In gaude grene / hir statue yclothed was
 With bowe in honde / and arwes in a cas 2080
 Hir eyen caste she / ful lowe adown
 Ther Pluto / hath his dirke Regioun
 A womman trauallyng^t was hir biforn
 But for hir child / so longe was unborn 2084
 fful pitously / lucina gan she calle
 And seyde help / for thow mayst best of alle
 Wel koude he peynte lyfly / that it wroghte
 With many a floryn / he the hewes boghte 2088
 ¶ Now been thise listes maad / and Theseus
 That at his grete cost^t arrayed thus
 The temples / and the Theatre euery del
 Whan it was doon / hym liked wonder wel 2092
 But stynte I wole / of Theseus alite
 And speke of Palamon / and of Arcite
 ¶ The day approacheth / of hir retournynge
 That euerich / sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge 2096
 The bataille to darreyne / as I yow tolde (leaf 28, back
 And til Atthenes / hir couenant for to holde
 Hath euerich of hem / broght a hundred knyghtes
 Wel armed for the werre / at alle rightes 2100
 And sikerly / ther trowed many a man
 That neuere sithen / þat the world bigan
 As for to speke / of knyghthod of hir hond
 As fer / as god hath makid see and lond 2104
 Nas of so fewe / so noble a compaignye

ffor euery wight þat loued chiualrye
 And wolde his thankes / han a passant name
 Hath prayd / that he myghte been of that game 2108
 And wel was hym / þat ther to chosen was
 ffor if ther fille / tomorwe swich a cas
 Ye knowen wel / þat euery lusty knyght/
 That loueth paramours / and hath his myght 2112
 Were it in Engeland / or ellis where
 They wolde hir thankes / wilnen to be there
 To fighten for a lady / benedicitee
 It were a lusty sighte / for to see 2116
 ¶ And right so / ferden they with Palamon
 With hym ther wenten / knyghtes many oon
 Som wol ben armed / in an haubergeon
 And in a Brestplate / and in a light gypon 2120
 And som wol haue / a piere plates large
 And som wol haue / a Pruce sheeld / or a targe
 Som wol been armed / on his legges weel
 And haue an Ax / and som a Maas of steel 2124
 Ther nys no newe gyse / þat it nas oold
 Armed were they / as I haue yow toold
 Euerich / after his opinyon
 ¶ Ther maystow seen / comynge with Palamon 2128
 Lygurge hym self the grete kyng of Trace
 Blak was his beard / and manly was his face
 The cercles of his eyen / in his heed
 They gloweden / bitwixen yelow and reed 2132
 And lyk a griffon / loked he aboute
 With keempe herys / on his browes stoute
 His lymes grete / his brawnes / harde and stronge
 Hys shuldres brode / hise armes rounde and longe 2136
 And as the gyse was / in his contree [leaf 29]
 fful hye / vp on a Chaar of gold stood he
 With foure white Boles / in the trays
 In stide of Cotearmure / ouer his harnays 2140
 With nayles yelwe / and brighte as any gold

He hadde a Berys Skyn / colblak / for old
 His longe heer / was kemberd bihynde his bak'
 As any Rauenes fetthere / it shoon for blak' 2144
 A wrethe of gold / greet of huge wighte
 Vp on his heed / and ful of stones brighte
 Of fyne Rubyes / and of dyamauntz
 Aboute his Chaar / they wente white Alauntz 2148
 Twenty and mo / as grete as any Steer
 To huntun at the leon / and the deer
 And folwed hym / with mosel faste ybounde
 Colered of gold / and turrets filed rounde 2152
 An hundred lordes / hadde he in his route
 Armed ful wel / with hertes stierne and stoute
 ¶ With Arcita / in stories as men fynde
 The grete Emetrius / the kyng of Inde 2156
 Vp on a Steede bay / trapped in steel
 Couered in a clooth of gold / dyapred weel
 Cam ridyng / lyk the god of Armes Mars
 His cote armure / was of clooth of Tars 2160
 Couched with perlys white / and rounde and grete
 His sadel was / of brend gold newe ybete
 A Mantelet vp on his shulder hangyng
 Bretful of Rubies reede / as fyr sparklyng 2164
 His crispe heer / lyk rynges was yronne
 And that was yelow / and glitred as the sonne
 His nose was heigh / hise eyen bright Citryn
 His lyppes rounde / his colour was sangwyn 2168
 A fewe fraknes / in his face yspreynd
 Bitwixen yelow / and som del blak ymeynd
 And as a leon / he his lookyng caste
 Of .xxv. yeer / his age I caste 2172
 His beard / was wel bigonne for to spryng
 His voys / was as a trompe thonderyng
 Vp on his heed / he wered of laurer grene
 A gerland fressh / and lusty for to seene 2176
 Vp on his hand / he bar for his deduyt'

[leaf 29, back]

An Egle tame / as any lilie whyt
 An hundred lordes / hadde he with hym there
 Al armed saue hir heddes / in al hir gere 2180
 fful richely / in alle manere thynges
 ffor trusteth wel / þat dukes / Erles / kynges
 Were gadred / in this noble compaignye
 ffor loue / and for encrees of chivalrye 2184
 Aboute this kyng^t ther ran on euery part^t
 fful many a tame leon^d and leopart^t
 ¶ And in this wise / thise lordes alle and some
 Been on the Sonday / to the Citee come 2188
 Aboute pryme / and in the town alight^t
 ¶ This Theseus / this duc^t this worthy knyght^t
 Whan he hadde broght^t hem / in to his Citee
 And Inned hem / euerich at his degree 2192
 He festeth hem / and dooth so gret labour
 To esen hem / and doon hem al honour
 That yet men wenen / þat no mannes wit^t
 Of noon estaat^t ne koude amenden it/ 2196
 ¶ The Mynstraleye / the seruyce / at the feeste
 The grete yiftes / to the meeste and leeste
 The ryche array / of Theseus Paleys
 Ne who sat first^t or last^t vp on the deys 2200
 What ladyes fairest been / and best daunsynge
 Or which of hem / kan daunse best and synge
 Ne who moost feelyngly / speketh of loue
 What haukes sitten / on the perche aboue 2204
 What houndes lyggen / on the floor adown
 Of al this / make I now no mencion
 But al theffect^t that thynketh me the beste
 Now comth the point^t and herkneth if yow leste 2208
 ¶ The Sonday nyght^t er day bigan to sprynge
 Whan Palamon / the larke herde synge
 Al thogh it nere nat day / by houres two
 Yet soong the larke / and Palamon right tho 2212
 With holy herte / and with an heigh corage

He roos / to wenden on his pilgrymage
 Vn to the blisful / Scitherea benygne
 I mene Venus / honorable and digne 2216
 And in hir hour / he walketh forth a paas [leaf 50]
 Vn to the lystes / ther hir temple was
 And down he kneleth / and with humble cheere
 And herte soor / he seyde as ye shal heere 2220
 ¶ ffaireste of faire / o lady myn Venus
 Doghter of Ioue / and spouse to Vulcanus
 Thow gladere / of the mount of Cytheron
 ffor thilke loue / thow haddest to Adoon 2224
 Haue pitee / of my bittre teerys smerte
 And taak myn humble prayere at thyn herte
 ¶ Allas I ne haue no langage to telle
 Theffecte . ne the tormentz of myn helle 2228
 Myn herte / may myne harmes nat biwreye
 I am so confus / þat I kan noght seye
 But mercy lady bright þat knowest wele
 My thoght and seest what harmes þat I feele 2232
 Considre al this / and rewe vp on my soore
 As wisly / as I shal for euere moore
 Emforth my myght thy trewe seruant be
 And holden werre / alwey with chastitee 2236
 That make I myn avow / so ye me helpe
 I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe
 Ne I ne axe noght / tomorwe / to haue victorie
 Ne renoun in this cas / ne veyne glorie 2240
 Of prys of armes / blowen vp and down
 But I wolde haue / fully possessioun
 Of Emelye / and dye in thy seruyse
 ffynd thow the manere / how / and in what wyse 2244
 I recche nat but it may better be
 To haue victorie of hem / or they of me
 So þat I haue / my lady in myn armes
 ffor thogh so be / þat Mars is god of armes 2248
 Yourte vertu is so greet in heuene aboue

That if yow list I shal wel haue my loue
 ¶ Thy temple / wol I worshiþe euere mo
 And on thyn Auter / wher I ryde or go 2252
 I wol doon sacrifice / and fyres beete
 And if ye wol noght so / my lady sweete
 Thanne praye I thee / to morwe with a spere
 That Arcita / me thurgh the herte bere 2256
 Thanne rekke I noght whan I haue lost my lyf [leaf 30, back]
 Thogh þat Arcita / wyne hire to his wyf
 This is the effect and ende of my prayere
 Yif me my loue / thow blisful lady deere 2260
 ¶ Whan the orison was doon / of Palamon
 His sacrifice he dide / and that anon
 fful pitously / with alle circumstances
 Al telle I nat as now / his obseruances 2264
 But at the laste / the Statue of Venus shockt
 And made a signe / wher by þat he tookt
 That his prayere / accepted was that day
 ffor thogh the signe / shewed a delay 2268
 Yet wiste he wel / þat graunted was his boone
 And with glad herte / he wente hym hoom ful soone
 ¶ The thridde hour in equal / þat Palamon
 Bigan / to Venus temple / for to gon 2272
 Vp roos the soone / and vp roos Emelye
 And to the temple of Diane / gan hye
 Hir maydens / þat she thider with hire ladde
 fful redily with hem / the fyr they hadde 2276
 Thencens / the clothes / and the remenant al
 That to the sacrifice / longen shal
 The hornes ful of Mede / as was the gyse
 Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrificise 2280
 ¶ Smokyng the temple / ful of clothes faire
 This Emelye / with herte debonaire
 Hir body wessh / with water of a welle
 But hou she dide hir ryte / I dar nat telle 2284
 But it be / any thyng in general

And yet it were a game / to heren al
 To hym þat meneth wel / it nere no charge
 But it is good / a man be at his large 2288
 ¶ Hir brighte heer was kembed / vntressed al
 A corone / of a grene ook^r cerial
 Vp on hir heed was set ful fair and meete
 Two fyres / on the Auter gan she beete 2292
 And dide hir thynges / as men may biholde
 In Stace of Thebes / and othere bokes olde
 Whan kyndled was the fyr / with pitous cheere
 Vn to Diane / she spak / as ye may heere 2296
 ¶ O chaste goddesse / of the wodes grene [leaf 31]
 To whom / bothe heuene / and erthe / and See is seene^{i. mare}
 Queene of the regne of Pluto / derk and lowe
 Goddess of maydenes / þat myn herte hast knowe 2300
 fful many a yeer / and woost what I desire
 As keepe me / fro thy vengeance and thyn Ire
 That Attheon^d / aboghte crewelly
 Chaste goddesse / wel wostow þat I 2304
 Desire / to been a mayden / al my lyf^r
 Ne neuere wol I be / no loue / ne wyf^r
 I am thow woost yet of thy compaignye
 A mayde / and loue huntyng^r and venerye 2308
 And for to walken / in the wodes wilde
 And noght to been a wyf / and be with childe
 Noght wol I knowe / compaignye of man
 Now help me lady / sith ye may and kan 2312
 ffor tho thre formes / þat thow hast in thee
 And Palamon / þat hath swich loue to me
 And eek Arcite / þat loueth me so soore
 This grace I praye thee / with oute moore 2316
 As seend[e] loue and pees / bitwix hem two
 And fro me / turn^d away / hir hertes so
 That al hir hote loue / and hir desir
 And al hir bisy torment^r and hir fyr 2320
 Be queynt^r and turned in another place

And if so be / thow vult noght do me grace
 Or if my destynnee / be shape so
 That I shal nedes / haue oon of hem two 2324
 As seend me hym / þat moost desireth me
 Bihoold goddesse / of clene chastitee
 The bittre teerys / þat on my chekes falle
 Syn thow art mayde / and kepere of vs alle 2328
 My maydenhode thow kepe / and wel conserue
 And whil I lyue / a mayde I wol thee serue
 ¶ The fyres brenne / vp on the Auter cleere
 Whil Emelie / is thus in hir prayere 2332
 But sodeynly / she seigh a sighte queynte
 ffor right anon / oon of the fyres queynte
 And quyked agayn / and after that anon
 That oother fyr was queyntⁱ and al agon 2336
 And as it queynte / it made a whistlynge [leaf 31, back]
 As doon thise weete brondes / in hir brennynge
 And at the brondes ende / out ran anoon
 As it were / bloody dropes many oon 2340
 ffor which / so soore agast was Emelye
 That she was wel neigh mad / and gan to crye
 ffor she ne wiste / what it signyfyed
 But oonly for the feere / thus hath she cryed 2344
 And weepe / þat it was pitee for to heere
 ¶ And ther with al / Diane gan appeere
 With bowe in honde / right as an hunteresse
 And seyde doghter / stynt thyn heuynesse 2348
 Among^t the goddes hye / it is affermed
 And by eterne word / writen and confermed
 Thou shalt be wedded / vn to oon of tho
 That han for thee / so muche care and wo 2352
 But vn to which of hem / I may noght telle
 ffare wel / for I ne may no lenger dwelle
 The fires / which þat on myn Auter brenne
 Shul thee declaren / er þat thow go henne 2356
 Thyn auenture of loue / as in this cas

And with that word / the Arwes in the Caas
 Of the goddesse / clateren faste and rynge
 And forth she wente / and made a vanysshynge 2360
 ffor which / this Emelye astoned was
 And seyde / what amounteth this allas
 I putte me / in thy proteccion
 Diane / and in thy disposicion 2364
 And hoom she gooth anoon / the nexte weye
 This is theeffect ther nys namoore to seye
 ¶ The nexte houre of Mars / folwyng this
 Arcite / vn to the temple walked is 2368
 Of fierse Mars / to doon his sacrificise
 With alle the rytes / of his payen wise
 With pitous herte / and heigh deuocion
 Right thus to Mars / he seyde his orison 2372
 ¶ O stronge god / þat in the regnes colde
 Of Trace / honoured art and lord yholde
 And hast in euery regne / and euery lond
 Of armes / al the brydel in thyn hond 2376
 And hem fortunest as thee list deuyse [leaf 32]
 Accepte of me / my pitous sacrificise
 If so be / þat my youthe may disserue
 And þat my myght be worthy for to serue 2380
 Thy godhede / þat I may be oon of thyne
 Thanne praye I thee / to rewe vp on my pyne
 ffor thilke peyne / and thilke hote fyr
 In which / thou whilom brendest for desir 2384
 Whan þat thou vsedest the beautee
 Of faire yonge / fresshe Venus free
 And haddest hire in armes at thy wille
 Al though thee ones / on a tyme mysfille 2388
 Whan Vulcanus / hadde caught thee in his laas
 And foond thee lyggyng by his wyf allas
 ffor thilke sorwe / þat was in thyn herte
 Haue routhe as wel / vp on my peynes smerte 2392
 I am yong / and vnkonnyng as thou woost/

And as I trowe / with loue offended moost^t
 That euere was / any lyues creature
 ffor she þat dooth me / al this wo endure 2396
 Ne reccheth neuere / wher I synke or fleete
 And wel I woot^t er she me mercy heete
 I moot with strengthe / wyne hire in the place
 And wel I woot^t with outhen help and grace 2400
 Of thee / ne may my strengthe noght auaille
 Thanne help me lord / tomorwe in my bataille
 ffor thilke fyr / þat whilom brende thee
 As wel as thilke fyr / now brenneth me 2404
 And do þat I tomorwe / may haue victorie
 Myn be the trauaille / and thyn be the glorie
 Thy souereyn temple / wol I moost honouren
 Of any place / and alwey moost labouren 2408
 In thy plesaunce / and in thy craftes stronge
 And in thy temple / I wol my baner honge
 And alle the armes / of my compaignye
 And euere mo / vn til þat day I dye 2412
 Eterne fyr / I wol biforn thee fynde
 And eek to this auow / I wol me bynde
 My berd / myn heer / þat hangeth long adown
 That neuere yet^t ne felte offensioun 2416
 Of Rasour / nor of Shere / I wol thee yiue [leaf 32, back]
 And been thy trewe seruant^t whil I lyue
 Now lord haue routhe / vp on my sorwes soore
 Yif me the victorie / I axe thee namoore 2420
 ¶ The prayere stynt^t of Arcita the stronge
 The rynges / on the temple dore þat honge
 And eek^t the dores / clatereden ful faste
 Of which Arcita / som what hym agaste 2424
 The fires brende / vp on the Auter brighte
 That it gan al the temple for to lighte
 A swete smel / anoon the ground vp yaf^t
 And Arcita / anoon his hand vp haf^t 2428
 And moore encens / in to the fyr he caste

With othere rytes mo / and at the laste
 ¶ The statue of Mars / bigan his hauberk^t ryngē
 And with that sown / he herde a *murmuryngē* 2432
 fful lowe and dym / and seyde thus / Victorie
 ffor which / he yaf to Mars / honour and glorie
 ¶ And thus with ioye / and hope / wel to fare
 Arcite anoon / vn to his In is fare 2436
 As fayn as fowel / is of the brighte sonne
 ¶ And right anoon / swich stryf ther is bigonne
 ffor thilke graunting^t in the heuene aboue
 Bitwixe Venus / the goddesse of loue 2440
 And Mars / the sterne god armipotente
 That Iuppiter / was bisy it to stente
 Til *pat* the pale / Saturnus the colde
 That knew so manye / of auentures olde 2444
 ffoond in his olde experience / an art^t
 That he ful soone / hath plesed euery part^t
 As sooth is seyde / elde hath greet auantage
 In elde / is bothe wisdom and vsage 2448
 Men may the olde atrenne and nat atrede ✓
 Saturne anoon / to stynten stryf and drede
 Al be it / *pat* it is agayn his kynde
 Of al this stryf^t he kan remedie fynde 2452
 ¶ My deere doghter Venus / quod Saturne
 My cours / that hath so wyde for to turne
 Hath moore power / than woot any man
 Myn is the drenchyng^t in the See so wan 2456
 Myn is the prison / in the derke cote [leaf 33]
 Myn is the stranglyng^t and hangyng by the throte
 The murmur / and the cherles rebellynge
 The groynyng^t and the pryuce empoysonyngē 2460
 I do vengeance / and pleyn correccion
 Whil I dwelle / in the signe of the leon
 Myn is the ruyne / of the heighe halles
 The fallyng^t of the toures / and of the walles 2464
 Vp on the Mynour / or the Carpenter /

I slow Sampson / shakyng the piler ✓
 And myne be / the maladies colde
 The derke tresons / and the castes olde 2468
 My lookyng^t is the fader of pestilence
 Now weep namoore / I shal doon diligence
 That Palamon / that is thyn owene knyght^t
 Shal haue his lady / as thow hast hym hight^t 2472
 Thogh Mars shal helpe his knyght^t yet nathelees
 Bitwixe yow / ther moot be som tyme pees
 Al be ye noght^t of o complexion
 That causeth al day / swich diuision 2476
 I am thyn Aiel / redy at thy wille
 Weepe now namoore / I wol thy lust fulfille
 ¶ Now wol I stynten / of the goddes aboue
 Of Mars / and of Venus / goddesse of loue 2480
 And telle yow / as pleynty as I kan
 The grete effect^t. for which þat I bigan

[No gap in the MS.] /

¶ Greet was the feeste / in Atthenes that day
 And eek the lusty seson / of that May 2484
 Made euery wight^t to been in swich plesaunce
 That al that monday / Iusten they and daunce
 And spenden it^t in Venus heigh seruyse
 And by the cause / þat they sholde ryse 2488
 Erly / for to seen the grete sight^t
 Vn to hir reste / wente they at nyght^t
 And on the morwe / whan the day gan sprynge
 Of hors and harneys / noyse and claterynge 2492
 Ther was in hostelryes / al aboute
 And to the paleys / rood ther many a route
 Of lordes / vp on steedes and palfreys
 Ther maistow seen / deuysynge of harneys 2496
 So vnkouth / and so ryche / and wrought so weel [leaf 33, back]
 Of Goldsmythrye / of Broudyng^t and of steel

The sheldes brighte / testers / and trappures
 Goldhewen helmes / hauberkes / cote armures 2500
 Lordes in parementz / on hir coursers
 Knyghtes of retenue / and eek Squyers
 Nailynge the speres / and the helmes bokelynge ✓
 Gyggynge of sheeldes / with layners lasynge 2504
 Ther as nede is / they were no thyng ydel
 The fomy steedes / on the golden brydel
 Gnawynge / and faste the Armurers also
 With fyle and hamer / prykyng to and fro 2508
 Yemen on foote / and communes many oon
 With shorte staues / thikke as they may goon
 Pipes / trompes / Nakers / Claryounes
 That in the bataille / blowen bloody sownes 2512
 The paleys ful of peples / vp and down
 Heer thre / ther ten / holdynge hir questioun
 Deuynynge / of thise Thebans knyghtes two
 Somme seyde thus / somme seyden it shal be so 2516
 Somme helden with hym / with the blake berd
 Somme *with* the balled / somme *with* the thikke herd
 Somme seyde / he looked grym / and he wolde fighte
 He hath a Sparth / of .xx. pound of wighte 2520
 Thus was the halle / ful of deuynynge
 Longe after / þat the sonne gan to sprynge
 ¶ The grete Theseus / þat of his sleepe awaked ✓
 With mynstralceye / and noyse þat was maked 2524
 Held yet the chambres / of his paleys ryche
 Til þat the Theban knyghtes / bothe yliche
 Honoured / . weren in to the paleys fet
 ¶ Duc Theseus / is at a wyndow set 2528
 Arrayed / right as he weere a god in Trone
 The peple preeseth / thiderward ful soone
 Hym for to seen / and doon heigh reuerence
 And eek / to herkne his heste / and his sentence 2532
 ¶ An heraud on a Scaffold / made an .oo.
 Til al the noyse / of the peple was ydo

And whan he say the peple / of noyse al stille
 Thus shewed he / the myghty dukes wille 2536
 ¶ The lord hath / of his heighe discrecion (leaf 34)
 Considred / þat it were destruccion ✓
 To gentil blood / to fighten in the gyse
 Of mortal bataille / now in this emprise 2540
 Wher fore / to shapen / þat they shal noght dye
 He wole / his firste purpos modifie
 ¶ No man ther fore / vp on payne / of los of lyf
 No manere shot' ne polax / ne short knyft 2544
 In to the lystes sende / or thider brynge
 Ne short swerd for to stoke / with point bitynge
 No man ne drawe / ne bere it by his syde
 Ne no man / shal vn to his felawe ryde 2548
 But o cours / with a sharp ygrounde spere
 ffloyne if hym list on foote / hym self to were
 And he þat is at meschief / shal be take
 And noght slayn / but be broght vn to the stake 2552
 That shal been ordeyned / on eyther syde
 But thider he shal bi force / and ther abyde
 And if so falle / the Chiefteyn be take
 On outhur syde / or ellis sleen his make 2556
 No lenger / shal the tourneying laste
 God spede yow / go forth and ley on faste
 With long swerd / and with mace / fighteth your fille
 Go now youre wey / this is the lordes wille ✓ 2560
 ¶ The voys of peple / touched the heuene
 So loude cryde they / with loude steuene
 God saue swich a lord / that is so good
 He wilneth / no destruccion of blood 2564
 ¶ Vp goon the trompes / and the melodye
 And to the lystes / ryt the compaignye
 By ordinance / thurgh out the Citee large
 Hanged with clooth of gold / and noght with sarge 2568
 ¶ ffyl lyk a lord / this noble duc gan ryde
 Thise two Thebans / vp on eyther syde

And after rood the queene / and Emelye
 And after that another compaignye 2572
 Of oon and oother / after hire degree
 And thus they passen / thurgh out the Citee
 And to the lystes / coome they bityme
 It nas nat of the day / yet fully pryme 2576
 ¶ Whan set was Theseus / ful ryche and hye [leaf 34, back]
 Ypolita the queene / and Emelye
 And othere ladyes / in degrees aboute
 Vn to the setes / preeseth al the route 2580
 And westward / thurgh the gates vnder Marte
 Arcite / and eek the hundred of his parte
 With baner reed / is entred right anon
 ¶ And in that selus moment Palamon 2584
 Is vnder Venus / Estward in the place
 With baner whit / and hardy cheere and face
 In al the world / to seken vp and down
 So euene / with outen variacioun 2588
 Ther nere / swiche compaignyes tweye
 ffor ther was noon so wys / þat koude seye
 That any hadde / of oother auantage
 Of worthynesse / ne of estaat ne age 2592
 So euene / were they chosen for to gesse
 And in two ringes / faire they hem dresse
 ¶ Whan þat hir names / rad were euerichon
 That in hir nombre / gyle were ther noon 2596
 Tho were the gates shet and cryd was loude
 Do now youre deuoir / yonge knyghtes proude
 ¶ The heraudes / lefte hir prikyng vp and down
 Now ryngen trompes loude / and Clarioun 2600
 Ther is namore to seyn / but west and Est
 In goon the speres / ful sadly in the arest
 In gooth the sharpe spore / in to the syde
 Ther seen men / who kan Iuste / and who kan ryde 2604
 Ther shyueren shaftes / vp on sheeldes thikke
 He feeleth / thurgh the herte spoon the prykke

Vp spryngeth speres / twenty foot on highte
 Out goon the swerdes / as the siluer brighte 2608
 The helmes they tohewen / and to-shrede
 Out brest the blood / with sterne stremys rede
 With myghty maces / the bones they tobreste
 He thurgh the thikkeſt of the throng gan threſte 2612
 Ther stomblen ſteedes ſtronge / and doun gooth al
 He rolleth vnder foot as dooth a bal
 He foyneth on his feet with his tronchoun
 And he hym hurteth / with his hors adoun 2616
 He thurgh the body is hurt and ſithen ytake [leaf 35]
 Maugree his heed / and broght vn to the Stake
 As forward was / right there he moſte abyde
 Another / lad is on that oother ſyde 2620
 ¶ And ſom tyme / dooth hem Theſeus to reſte
 Hem to refreſſhe / and drynken if hem leſte
 ffuſte ofte a-day / haue theſe Thebans two
 Togydre ymet and wroght his felawe wo 2624
 Vnhorsed hath ech oother / of hem tweye
 Ther nas no tygre / in the vale of Galgopheye
 Whan þat hir whelp is ſtole / whan it is lyte
 So cruel on the hunte / as is Arcite 2628
 ffor Ialous herte / vp on this Palamon
 Ne in Belmarye / ther nys ſo fel leon
 That hunted is / or for his hunger wood
 Ne of his praye / deſireth ſo the blood 2632
 As Palamon / to ſleen his foo Arcite
 The Ialous ſtrokes / on hir helmes byte
 Out renneth blood / on bothe hir ſydes rede
 ¶ Som tyme an ende ther is / of euery dede 2636
 ffor er the ſonne / vn to the reſte wente
 The ſtronge kyng Emetrius / gan hente
 This Palamon / as he faught with Arcite
 And made his ſwerd / depe in his fleſſh to byte 2640
 And by the force of twenty / is he take
 Vnyolden / and ydrawen to the ſtake

And in the rescous / of this Palamon
 The stronge kyng lygurge / is born adoun 2644
 And kyng Emetrius / for al his strengthe
 Is born out of his sadel / a swerdes lengthe
 So hitte hym Palamon / er he were take
 But al for noght^t he was broght to the stake 2648
 His hardy herte / myghte hym helpe naught^t
 He moste abyde / whan þat he was caught^t
 By force / and eek by composicion
 ¶ Who sorweth now / but woful Palamon 2652
 That moot namoore / goon agayn to fighte
 And whan þat Theseus / hadde seen this sighte
 Vn to the folk / that foghten thus echon
 He cryde / hoo namoore / for it is doon 2656
 I wol be trewe Iuge / and nat partye [leaf 35, back]
 Arcite of Thebes / shal haue Emelye
 That by his fortune / hath hire faire ywonne
 Anon ther is a noyse of peple bigonne 2660
 ffor ioye of this / so loude and heigh with alle
 It semed / þat the lystes sholde falle
 ¶ What kan now faire Venus / doon aboue
 What seith she now / what dooth this queene of loue 2664
 But wepeth so / for wantyng of hir wille
 Til þat hir teerys / in the lystes fille
 She seyde / I am ashamed doutelees
 ¶ Saturnus seyde / doghter hoold thy pees 2668
 Mars hath his wyl / his knyght^t hath al his boone
 And by myn heed / thou shalt been esed soone
 ¶ The trompours / with the loude Mynstralceye
 The heraudes / þat ful loude yelle and crye 2672
 Been in hir wele / for ioye of daun Arcite
 But herkneth me / and stynteth noyse a lite
 Which a myracle / ther bifel anon
 ¶ This fierse Arcite / hath of his helm ydon 2676
 And on a Courser / for to shewe his face
 He priketh / endelong^t the large place

Lookyng vpward / vp on this Emelye
 And she agayn / hym caste a freendly eye 2680
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 And she was al his cheere / as in his herte
 Out of the ground / a furye Infernal sterte 2684
 ffrom Pluto sent at requeste of Saturne
 ffor which his hors / for feere gan to turne
 And leep asyde / and foundred as he leepe
 And er þat Arcite / may taken keepe 2688
 He pighte hym / on the pomel of his heed
 That in the place / he lay as he were deed
 His brest to brosten / with his Sadel bowe
 As blak he lay / as any col / or crowe 2692
 So was the blood / yronnen in his face
 Anon he was yborn out of the place
 With herte soor / to Theseus Paleys
 Tho was he coruen / out of his harneys 2696
 And in a bed ybrought ful faire and blyue
 ffor he was yet in memorie and alyue
 And alwey crynge / after Emelye [leaf 36]
 ¶ Duc Theseus / with al his compaignye 2700
 Is comen hoom / to Atthenes his Citee
 With alle blisse / and greet solempnytee
 Al be it þat this auenture was falle
 He nolde noght disconforten hem alle 2704
 ¶ Men seyde eek Arcite / shal nat dye
 He shal been heelyd / of his maladye
 And of another thyng / they were as fayn
 That of hem alle / was ther noon yslayn 2708
 Al were they soore yhurt and namely oon
 That *with* a Spere / was thirled the brest boon
 ¶ To oothere woundes / and to broken armes
 Somme hadden salues / and somme hadden charmes 2712
 ffermayes of herbes and eek saue
 They dronken / for they wolde hir lymes haue

ffor which this noble duc / as he wel kan
 Conforteth / and honoureth euery man 2716
 And made reuel / al the longe nyght
 Vn to the straunge lordes / as was right
 ¶ Ne ther was holden to disconfitynge
 But as a Iustes / or a tourneyinge 2720
 ffor soothly / there was no disconfiture
 ffor fallynge. nys nat but an auenture
 Ne to been had by force vn to the stake
 Vnyolden / and with twenty knyghtes take 2724
 A persone allone / with outen mo
 And haryed forth / by arm / foot / and to
 And eek his steede / dryuen forth with staues
 With footmen / bothe yemen and eek knaues 2728
 It nas arretted hym / no vileynye
 Ther may no man / clepe it cowardye
 ¶ ffor which anon / Duc Theseus leet crye
 To stynten / al rancour and enuye 2732
 The gre / as wel of oo syde as of oother
 And eyther syde ylyk as otheres brother
 And yaf hem yiftes / after hir degree
 And fully heeld a feeste / dayes three 2736
 And conueyed / the kynges worthily
 Out of his toun / a iournee largely
 And hoom wente euery man / the righte way [leaf 36, back]
 Ther was namoore / but fare wel haue good day 2740
 Of this bataille / I wol namoore endite
 But speke of Palamon / and of Arcite [A break in the MS. with]
 ¶ Explicit secunda
 Swelleth the brest of Arcite / and the soore ^{pars}
 ¶ Incipit pars tertia
 & vltima
 Encreese that his herte / moore and moore
 The clothed blood / for any lechecraft
 Corrupteth / and is in his bouk / ylast
 That neyther veyne blood / ne ventusyng
 Ne drynke of herbes / may been his helpynge 2748
 The vertu expulsyf / or animal
 firo thilke vertu / clepyd natural

Ne may the venym / voyden ne expelle
 The pipes of his longes / gan to swelle 2752
 And euery lacerte / in his brest adown
 Is shent^t with venym and corrupcioun
 Hym gayneth neither / for to gete his lyf
 Vomyt vpward / ne downward laxatyf^t 2756
 Al is to brosten / thilke regioun
 Nature / hath no dominacioun
 And certainly / ther nature wol nat werche
 ffare wel Phisyk^t. go ber the man to cherche 2760
 This al and som / þat Arcita moot dye
 ffor which / he sendeth after Emelye
 And Palamon / þat was his cosyn deere
 Thanne seyde he thus / as ye shal after heere 2764
 ¶ Nat may the woful spirit in myn herte
 Declare a point^t of alle my sorwes smerte
 To yow my lady / þat I loue moost^t
 But I byquethe / the seruice of my goost^t 2768
 To yow / abouen euery creature
 Syn þat my lyf / may no lenger dure
 Allas the wo / allas the peynes stronge
 That I for yow haue suffred / and so longe 2772
 Allas the deeth / allas myn Emelye [leaf 37]
 Allas / departyng^t of oure compaignye
 Allas myn hertes queene / allas my wif
 Myn hertes lady / endere of my lyf 2776
 What is this world / what axeth men to haue
 Now with his loue / now in his colde graue
 [.
 2780

 *no gap in the MS.*]
 ¶ I haue heer / with my cosyn Palamon
 Had stryf and rancour / many a day gon 2784
 ffor loue of yow / and for my Ialousye
 And Iuppiter / so wys my soule gye

To speken / of a seruau^t proprely
 With circumstaunces alle / trewely 2788
 That is to seyn / trouthe / honour / knyghthede
 Wisdom / humblesse / estaat / and heigh kynrede
 ffreedom / and al / that longeth to that art
 So Iuppiter / haue of my soule part 2792
 As in this world / right now ne knowe I non
 So worthy to been loued / as Palamon
 That serueth yow / and wol doon al his lyf
 And if þat euere / ye shal been a wyf 2796
 fforyet nat Palamon / the gentil man
 And with that word / his speche faille gan
 ffor from his feet vp to his brest was come
 The coold of deeth / þat hadde hym ouercome 2800
 And yet moore ouer / for in his armes two
 The vital strengthe / is lost and al ago
 Oonly the Intellect with oute moore
 That dwelled in his herte / syk and soore 2804
 Gan faillen / whan the herte felte deeth
 Dusked hise eyen two / and fayled breeth
 But on his lady / yet caste he his eye
 His laste word / was mercy Emelye 2808
 His spirit chaunged hous / and wente ther
 As I cam neuere / I kan nat tellen wher
 Therfore I stynte / I nam no dyuynystre
 Of soules / fynde I nat in this Registre 2812
 Ne me ne lyst thilke opynyons to telle
 Of hem / thogh þat they writen wher they dwelle
 Arcite is coold / ther Mars his soule gye
 Now wol I speken / forth of Emelye 2816
 ¶ Shrighte Emelye / and howleth Palamon [leaf 37, back]
 And Theseus / his suster took anon
 Swownynge / and baar hire fro the corps away
 What helpeth it to tarien forth the day 2820
 To tellen how she weepe / bothe eue and morwe
 ffor in swich caas / wommen haue swich sorwe

Whan þat hir housbondes / been from hem ago
 That for the moore part they sorwen so 2824
 Or ellis fallen / in swich a maladye
 That at the laste / *certainly* they dye
 ¶ Infinite / been the sorwes and the teerys
 Of olde folk . and folk of tendre yeerys 2828
 In all the town for the deeth of this Theban
 ffor hym ther wepeth bothe child a[nd] man
 So greet wepyng was ther noon *certayn*
 Whan Ector was broght al fressh yslayn 2832
 To Troye / alas the pitee þat was ther
 Cracchyng of chekes / rentyng eek of heer
 Why woldestow be deed / thise wommen crye
 And haddest gold ynow / and Emelye 2836
 ¶ No man / myghte gladen Theseus
 Sauyng his olde fader Egeus
 That knew / this worldes *transmutacioun*
 As he hadde seyn it chaungen / bothe vp and down 2840
 Loye after wo / and wo after gladnesse
 And shewed hem / ensample and lyknesse
 ¶ Right as ther deyed neuere man / quod he *Argumentum.*
 That he ne lyued in erthe / in som degree 2844
 Right so / ther lyued neuere man he seyde
 In al this world / þat som tyme he ne deyde
 This world nys but a thurghfare / ful of wo
 And we been pilgrymes / passynge to and fro 2848
 Deeth is an ende / of euery worldly soore
 And ouer al this / yet seyde he muchel moore
 To this effect ful wysly / to enhort
 The peple / that they sholde hem reconforte 2852
 ¶ Duc Theseus / with al his bisy cure
 Caste now / wher that the sepulture
 Of goode Arcite / may best ymaked be
 And eek moost honorable / in his degree 2856
 And at the laste / he took conclusion
 That ther / as first Arcite and Palamon

[leaf 38]

The thridde bar with hym / his bowe Turkeys
 Of brend gold / was the caas / and eek the harneys 2896
 And ryden forth a paas / with sorweful cheere [leaf 38, back]
 Toward the groue / as ye shul after heere
 The nobleste of the Grekys / þat ther were
 Vp on hir shuldres / carieden the beere 2900
 With slak[e] paas / and eyen rede and weete
 Thurgh out the Citee / by the maister streete
 That sprad was al with blak and wonder hye
 Right of the same / is the strete ywrye 2904
 Vp on the right hand / wente olde Egeus
 And on that oother syde / Duc Theseus
 With vessels in hir hand / of gold ful fyn
 As ful of hony / melk / and blood and wyn 2908
 Eek Palamon / with ful greet compaignye
 And after that / cam woful Emelye
 With fyr in hande / as was that tyme the gyse
 To do the office / of funeral seruyse 2912
 ¶ Heigh labour / and greet apparaillynge
 Was at the seruyce / and the fyr makyng
 That with his grene tope / the heuene raughte
 And twenty fadme of brede / the armes straughte 2916
 This is to seyn / the bowes / were so brode
 Of stree first ther was leyd many a lode
 But how the fyr was maked vp on highte
 Ne eek the names / how the trees highte ✓ 2920
 As ook / ffyrre / Birch / Asp / Alder / holm / popler
 Wylow / Elm / Plane / Assh / Box / Chestayn / lynde / laurer
 Mapul / Thorn / Beech / hasyl / Ew / Whippultree
 How they were feld / shal nat been told for me 2924
 Ne how the goddes / ronnen vp and down
 Desherited / of hir habitacioun
 In which they woneden / in reste and pees
 Nymphes / ffawnes / and Amadrides 2928
 Ne how the beestes / and the bryddes alle
 fildedden / for fered / whan the wode was falle

Ne how the ground / agast was of the lyght^t
 That was nat went^t to seen the sonne l right^t 2932
 Ne how the fyr / was couched first with stree
 And thanne with drye stikkes / clouen a three
 And thanne with grene wode / and spicerye
 And thanne with clooth of gold / and with perrye 2936
 And gerlandes hangyng / ful of many a flour [leaf 39]
 The Mirre / thencens / with al so greet sauour
 Ne how Arcite / lay among al this
 Ne what richesse / aboute the body is 2940
 Ne how that Emelye / as was the gyse
 Putte in the fyr / of funeral seruyse
 Ne how she swowned / whan men made the fyr
 Ne what she spok^t ne what was hir desir 2944
 Ne what Iuels / men in the fyr caste
 Whan þat the fyr was greet^t and brente faste
 Ne how somme caste hir sheeld / and somme hir spere
 And of hir vestimentz / whiche þat they were 2948
 And coppes fulle of Milk / and wyn and blood
 In to the fyr / þat brente as it were wood
 Ne how the Grekys / with An huge route
 Thries ryden / al the fyr aboute 2952
 Vp on the left hand / with a loud shoutynge
 And thries / with hir speres claterynge
 And thries / how the ladyes gonne crye
 And how þat lad / was homward Emelye 2956
 Ne how Arcite / is brent to Asshen colde
 Ne how that lychwake / was yholde
 Al thilke nyght^t ne how the grekys pleye
 The wake pleyes / ne kepe I noght to seye 2960
 Who wrastleth best naked / with oille enoynt^t
 Ne who þat baar hym best^t in no disioynt^t
 I wol nat tellen al / how [that] they goon
 Hoom til Atthenes / whan the pleye is doon 2964
 But shortly to the poynt^t than wol I wende
 And maken / of my longe tale an ende

¶ By *proces* / and by lengthe of certeyn yerys
 Al stynt is / the moornynge and the terys 2968
 Of Grekys / by oon general assent
 Thanne semed me / ther was a *parlement*
 At Atthenes / vp on a certeyn point and caas
 Among the whiche pointes / y-spoken was 2972
 To haue / with certeyn contrees alliance
 And haue fully / of Thebans obeisance
 ffor which this noble Theseus anon
 Leet senden / after gentil Palamon 2976
 Vnwist of hym / what was the cause and why [leaf 39, back]
 But in his blake clothes / sorwefully
 He cam at his comandement / in hye
 Tho sente Theseus / for Emelye 2980
 ¶ Whan they were set and hust was al the place
 And Theseus / abiden hath a space
 Er any word / cam from his wise brest/
 His eyen sette he ther as was his lest 2984
 And with a sad visage / he siked stille
 And after that right thus he seyde his wille
 ¶ The firste moeuere / of the cause aboue *Nota*
 Whan he first made / the faire cheyne of loue 2988
 Greet was theeffect and heigh was his entente
 Wel wiste he why / and what ther of he mente
 ffor with that faire cheyne of loue he boond
 The fyr / the Eyr / the water / and the loond 2992
 In certeyn boundes / þat they may nat flee
 That same Prince / and that moeuere quod he
 Hath stabliced / in this wrecched world adoun
 Certeine dayes / and duracioun 2996
 To al / that is engendred / in this place
 Ouer the which day / they may nat pace
 Al mowe they yet / tho dayes abregge
 Ther nedeth / noon auctoritee to allegge 3000
 ffor it is proued / by experience
 But þat me list declaren my sentence

Thanne may men wel / by this ordre discerne
 That thilke moeuere / stable is and eterne 3004
 Wel may men knowe / but it be a fool
 That euery partⁱ. is diryued from his hool
 ffor nature / hath nat taken his bigynnyngⁱ
 Of no partie / or of cantel of a thyngⁱ 3008
 But of a thyngⁱ. that *parfit* is and stable
 Descendynge so / til it be corruptible
 And ther fore / for his wise purueiaunce
 He hath / so wel biset his ordinaunce 3012
 That specis of thynges / and progressions
 Shullen enduren / by successions
 And noght eterne / with outen any lye
 This maistow vnderstonde / and seen at Iye 3016
 ¶ Loo the ook / that hath so long a norisshynge [leaf 40]
 ffro the tyme / that it first gynneth sprynge
 And hath so long a lyf / as ye may see
 Yet at the laste / wasted is the tree 3020
 ¶ Considreth eek / how þat the harde stoon
 Vnder oure footⁱ on which we ryde and goon
 It wasteth / as it lyth by the weye
 The brode Ryuer / som tyme wexeth dreye 3024
 The grete townes / se we wane and wende
 Thanne se ye / þat al this thyng hath ende
 Of man and womman / se we wel also
 That nedeth / in oon of thise *termes* two 3028
 This is to seyn / in youthe / or ellis age
 He moot be deed / the kyngⁱ as shal a page
 Som in his bed / som in the depe see
 Som in the large feeld / as ye may se 3032
 Ther helpeth noghtⁱ al gooth that ilke weye
 Thanne may I seyn / þat al this thyng moot deye
 What maketh this ? but Iuppiter the kyngⁱ
 That is Prince / and cause of alle thyngⁱ 3036
 Conuertynge / al vn to his propre welle
 ffrom which he is diryued sooth to telle

And heer agayns / no creature on lyue
 Of no degree / auailleth for to stryue 3040
 ¶ Thanne is it wisdom / as it thynketh me
 To maken vertu / of necessitee
 And take it wel / þat we may nat eschue
 And nameliche / that to vs alle is due 3044
 And who so gruccheth oght' he dooth folye
 And rebel is / to hym þat al may gye
 And certainly / a man hath moost honour
 To dyen / in his excellence and flour 3048
 Whan he is siker / of his goode name
 Thanne hath he doon / his freend ne hym no shame
 And gladder oghte / his freend been of his deeth
 Whan with honour / yolden is vp his breeth 3052
 Than whan his name / apalled is for age
 ffor al forgeten is his vasselage
 Thanne is it best' as for a worthy fame
 To dyen / whan he is best of name 3056
 ¶ The contrarie of al this / is wilfulnesse
 Why grucchen we / why haue we heuynesse
 That goode Arcite / of chiualrie flour [leaf 40, back]
 Departed is / with duetee / and with honour 3060
 Out of this foule prison / of this lyf
 Why gruccheth heere / his cosyn and his wyf/
 Of his welfare / þat loueth hem so weel
 Kan he hem thank'⁹ nay good woot neuer a deel 3064
 That bothe his soule / and eek hem self offende
 And yet they mowe / hir lustes nat amende
 ¶ What may I conclude / of this longe serye
 But after wo / I rede vs to be merye 3068
 And thanken Iuppiter / of al his grace
 And er we / departen from this place
 I rede we make / of sorwes two
 O parfit Ioye / lastynge euere mo 3072
 And loketh now / wher moost sorwe is her Inne
 Ther wol I first' amenden and bigynne

¶ Suster quod he / this is my ful assent
 With al thauys / heer of my parlement 3076
 That gentil Palamon / youre owene knyght
 That serueth yow / with wyl and herte myght
 And euere hath doon / syn ye first hym knewe
 That ye shal of youre grace vp on hym rewe 3080
 And taken hym / for housbond and for lord
 Leen me youre hond / for this is oure acord
 Lat se now / of youre wommanly pitee
 He is / a kynges brother sone pardee 3084
 And thogh he were / a poure Bachiler
 Syn he hath serued yow / so many a yeer
 And had for yow / so greet aduersitee
 It moste been considred / leueth me 3088
 ffor gentil mercy / oghte to passen right
 ¶ Thanne seyde he thus / to Palamon the knyght
 I trowe / ther nedeth litel sermonyng
 To make yow / assente to this thyng 3092
 Com neer / and taketh youre lady by the hond
 Bitwixe hem / was maad anon the bond
 That highte matrymoigne / or mariage
 By al the conseil / and the Baronage 3096
 And thus / with alle blisse / and melodye
 Hath Palamon / ywedded Emelye
 And god / that al this world hath wrought [leaf 41]
 Sende hym his loue / that hath it deere aboght 3100
 ffor now is Palamon / in alle wele
 Lyuynge in blisse / in richesse / and in heele
 And Emelye / hym loueth so tendrely
 And he / hir serueth so gentilly 3104
 That was ther no word hem bitwene
 Of Ialousie / or any oother teene
 Thus endeth Palamon / and Emelye
 And god saue / al this faire compaignye Amen 3108

¶ Here is ended the Knyghtes tale 3110

¶ The prologe of the Milleres tale ∞

WHan that the knyght hadde thus his tale ytoold
 In al the compaignie / nas ther yong ne oold
 That he ne seyde / it was a noble Storie
 And worthy / for to drawen to memorie 3112
 And namely / the gentils euerichon
 ¶ Oure hoost lough / and swoor so moot I gon
 This gooth aright vnboked is the male
 Lat se now / who shal telle another tale 3116
 ffor trewely / the game is wel bigonne
 Now telleth ye sire Monk / if þat ye konne
 Som what / to quite with the knyghtes tale
 ¶ The Millere / that for-dronken was a pale 3120
 So that vnnethe / vp on his hors he sat
 He nolde aualen / neither hood ne hat
 Ne abiden no man / for his curteisye
 But in Pilates vōys / he gan to crye 3124
 And swoor by armes / and by blood and bones
 I kan a noble tale / for the nones
 With which / I wol now quite the knyghtes tale
 ¶ Oure Hoost saugh / þat he was dronke of ale 3128
 ¶ And seyde / abyde Robyn leeue brother [leaf 41, back]
 Som better man / shal telle vs first another
 Abyde / and lat vs werken thriftily
 ¶ By goddes soule quod he / that wol nat I 3132
 ffor I wol speke / or ellis go my wey
 ¶ Oure Hoost answerde / tel on a deuele wey
 Thow art a fool / thy wit is ouercome
 ¶ Now herkneth quod the Millere / alle and some 3136
 But first I make a protestacioun
 That I am dronke / I knowe it by my sown
 And therefore / if þat I mysspeke / or seye
 Wite it / the ale of Southwerk I preye 3140

ffor I wol telle / a legende and a lyf
 Bothe of a Carpenter / and of his wyf
 How þat a clerk hath set the wrightes cappe
 ¶ The Reue answerde / and seyde stynt thy clappe 3144
 Lat be / thy lewed dronken harlotrye
 It is a synne / and eek a greet folye
 To apeyren any man / or hym diffame
 And eek to bryngen wyues / in swich fame 3148
 Thow mayst ynow / of othere thynges seyn
 ¶ This dronken Millere / spak ful soone ageyn
 And seyde / leue brother Osewold
 Who hath no wyf / he is no Cokewold 3152
 But I seye nat ther-fore / þat thow art oon
 Ther been ful goode wyues many oon
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] 3156
 Why artow angry / wit my tale now
 I haue a wyf pardee / as wel as thow
 Yet nolde I / for the oxen in my plough
 Take vp on me / moore than ynough 3160
 As demen of my self / þat I were oon
 I wol bileue wel / þat I am noon
 An housbonde / shal noght been Inquisityf/
 Of goddes pryuetee / nor of his wyf 3164
 So he may fynde / goddes foyson there
 Of the remenant nedeth noght enquere
 ¶ What sholde I moore seyn / but this Millere
 He nolde his wordes / for no man forbere
 But tolde his cherles tale / in his manere
 Me athynketh / that I shal reherce it heere
 And ther-fore / euery gentil wight I preye [leaf 42]
 Demeth noght for goddes loue / þat I seye 3172
 Of yuel entente / but for I moot reherse
 Hir tales alle / be they bet or werse
 Or ellis falsen / som of my matere
 And ther-fore / who so list it noght yhere 3176

Turne ouer the leef / and chese another tale	
ffor he shal fynde ynowe / grete and smale	
Of storial thyng ^t that toucheth gentilesse	
And eek moralitee / and holynesse	3180
Blameth noght me / if ^{pat} ye chese amys	
The Millere is a cherl / ye knowe wel this	
So was the Reue eek ^t and othere mo	
And harlotrye / they tolden bothe two	3184
Auyseth yow / and put me out of blame	
And eek ^t men shal noght ^t maken ernest of game	

[*Slight break in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth the Millerys tale 𐝑

Whilom ther was dwellyng at Oxenford^t
 A riche gnof^t that gestes heeld to bord^t 3188
 And of his craft^t he was a Carpenter
 With hym ther was dwellynge a poure Scoler
 Hadde lerned art^t but al his fantasie
 Was turned / for to leere Astrologie 3192
 And koude / a certeyn of conclusions
 To demen / by interrogacions
 If þat men axed hym / in certein houres
 Whan þat men sholde haue droghte / or ellis shoures 3196
 Or if men axed hym / what shal bifalle
 Of euery thyng / I may nat rekene hem alle
 ¶ This clerk / was clepyd hende Nicholas
 Of derne loue he koude / and of solas 3200
 And ther-to he was sleigh / and ful pryuee
 And lyk a mayde meke / for to see
 A chambre hadde he / in that hostelrie
 Allone / with-uten any compaignye 3204
 fful fetisly dight / with herbes swoote
 And he hym self^t as sweete as is the roote
 Of lycorys / or any Cetuale [leaf 42, back]
 His Almageste / and bookes grete and smale 3208
 His Astrelabye / longynge for his Art^t
 His Augrym stones / layen faire a part^t
 On shelues couched / at his beddes heed
 His presse / ycouered with a ffaldyng reed 3212
 And al aboue / ther lay a gay Sautrye
 On which / he made a nyghtes melodye
 So swetely / þat al the chambre roong^t
 And Angelus ad virginem / he soong^t 3216
 And after that^t he soong the kynges note
 fful often blissed was / his murye throte

And thus this swete clerk / his tyme spent
 After his freendes fyndyng^t and his rente 3220
 ¶ This Carpenter / hadde wedded newe a wyf
 Which þat he louede / moore than his lyf
 Of .xviij. yeer / she was of age
 Ialous he was / and heeld hire narwe in Cage 3224
 ffor she was wilde and yong / and he was old
 And demed hym self / been lyk a Cokewold^t
 He knew nat Catoñ / for his wit was rude
 That bad / man sholde wedde his similitude 3228
 Men sholde wedden / after hir estaat
 ffor youthe and Elde / is often at debaat
 But sith þat he / was fallen in the snare
 He moste endure / as oother folk^t his care 3232
 ¶ ffair was this yonge wyf / and ther with al
 As any wesele / hir body gent and smal
 A ceynt she werde / barred al of sylk/
 A harmclooth / as whit as morne Mylk^t 3236
 Vp on hir lendes / ful of many a goore
 Whit was hir smok^t and broyden al bifoore
 And eek bihynde / on hir coler aboute
 Of col blak silk / with-Inne and eek with-oute 3240
 The tapes / of hir white voluper
 Were of the same sute / of hir coler
 Hir filet brood of sylk^t and set ful hye
 And sikerly / she hadde a likerous Iye 3244
 fful smale ypullled / were hir browes two
 And tho were bent / and blake as is a slo
 She was ful moore / blisful on to see [leaf 43]
 Than is the newe / Pereionette tree 3248
 And softer / than the wolfe is of a wether
 And by hir girdel / heeng a purs of lether
 Tasseled with silk / and perled with latoun
 In al this world / to seken vp and down 3252
 Ther nys no man so wys / þat koude thenche
 So gay a Popelote / or swich a wenche

fful brighter was / the shynying of hir hewe
 Than in the Tour / the noble yforged newe 3256
 But of hir soong^t it was as loude and yerne
 As any swalwe / sitting on a Berne
 Ther-to / she koude skippe / and make game
 As any kyde / or Calf / folwyng his dame 3260
 Hir mouth was sweete / as Bragot^t or the meeth
 Or hoord of Apples / leyd in hey or heeth
 Wynsyng she was / as is a ioly Colt^t
 Loong as a Mast / and vprighte as a bolt^t 3264
 A brooch she baar / vp on hir loue coler
 As brood / as is the boos of a Bokeler
 Hir shoes were laced / on hir legges hye
 She was a Prymerole / a piggesnye 3268
 ffor any lord / to leggen in his bedde
 Or yet^t for any good yeman to wedde
 ¶ Now sire and eft sire / so bifel the cas
 That on a day / this hende Nicholas 3272
 ffil with this yonge wyf / to rage *and* pleye
 Whil þat hir housbonde / was at Osneye
 As clerkes been / ful subtil and ful queynte
 And pryuely / he caughte hire by the queynte 3276
 And seyde ywys / but if ich haue my wille
 ffor derne loue / of thee lemman I spille
 And heeld hire harde / by the haunche bones
 And seyde lemman / loue me al atones 3280
 Or I wol dyen / al so god me saue
 And she sproong^t as a Colt dooth in the Traue
 And with hir heed / she wryed faste away
 She seyde I wol nat kisse thee by my fey 3284
 Wy lat be quod ich / lat be Nicholas
 Or I wol crye / out harrow and allas
 Do wey youre handes / for youre curteisye [leaf 43, back]
 ¶ This Nicholas / gan mercy for to crye 3288
 And spak so faire / and profred hym so faste
 That she hir loue / hym graunted atte laste,

And swoor hir ooth / by Seint Thomas of Kent
 That she wolde been / at his comaundement 3292
 Whan þat she may / hir leyser wel espie
 Myn housbonde / is so ful of Ialousie
 That but ye waite wel / and been pryuee
 I woot right wel / I nam but deed quod she
 Ye moste been ful derne / as in this cas
 ¶ Nay ther of / care thee noght quod Nicholas
 A clere hadde lutherly / biset his while
 But if he koude / a Carpenter bigyle 3300
 And thus they been acorded and y-sworn
 To waite a tyme / as I haue told biforn
 Whan Nicholas / hadde doon thus euerydel
 And thakkcd hire / vp on the lendes wel 3304
 He kiste hir sweete / and taketh his sautrye
 And pleyeth faste / and maketh melodye
 ¶ Thanne fil it thus / þat to the parissch chirche
 Cristes owene werkes / for to wirche 3308
 This goode wyf / wente on an haliday
 Hir forheed shoon / as bright as any day
 So was it wasshen / whan she leet hir werk
 ¶ Now was ther of that chirche a parissch clerk 3312
 The which / þat was yclepid Absolon
 Crul was his heer / and as the gold it shoon
 And strouted as a fflanne / large and brode
 fful streight and euene / lay his ioly shode 3316
 His rode was reed / hise eyen greye as goos
 With Poules wyndow / coruen on his shoos
 In hoses rede / he wente fetisly
 Yclad he was / ful smal and proprely 3320
 Al in a kirtel / of a light waget
 fful faire and thikke / been the pointes set ¹ [1 set later]
 And ther vp on / he hadde a gay surplys
 As whit as is the blosme vp on the rys 3324
 A murye child he was / so god me saue
 Wel koude he laten blood / and clippe and shaue

And maken a chartre of lond / or Aquitaunce [leaf 14]
 On twenty manere / koude he trippe and daunce 3328
 After the scole / of Oxenford tho
 And with his legges / casten to and fro
 And pleyen songes / on a smal Rubible
 Ther-to he soong som tyme / a loud quynnyble 3332
 And as wel / koude he pleye on a gyterne
 In al the town / nas Brewhous ne Tauerne
 That he ne visited / with his solas
 Ther any gaylard tappestere was 3336
 But sooth to seyn / he was som del squaymous
 Of fartyng / and of speche daungerous
 ¶ This Absolon / þat ioly was and gay
 Gooth with a sencer / on the haliday 3340
 Sensynge the wyues / of the parisshe faste
 And many a louely look / on hem he caste
 And namely / on this Carpenters wyf
 To looke on hire / hym thoughte a murye lyf 3344
 She was so propre and sweete and likerous
 I dar wel seyn / if she hadde been a Mous
 And he a cat he wolde hir hente anon
 This parisshe clerk this ioly Absolon 3348
 Hath in his herte / swich a loue longynge
 That of no wyf / ne took he noon offrynge
 ffor curteisye / he seyde he wolde noon
 The Moone / whan it was nyght ful brighte shoon 3352
 And Absolon / his gyterne / hath ytake
 ffor paramours / he thoghte for to wake
 And forth he gooth / iolyf and amorous
 Til he cam / to the Carpenters hous 3356
 A litel after the cokkes hadde ycrowe
 And dressed hym vp / by a shot wyndowe
 That was / vp on the Carpenters wal
 He syngeth / in his voys / gentil and smal 3360
 Now deere lady / if thy wille be
 I prey yow / þat ye wol rewe on me

fiul wel acordant to his giternynge
 This Carpenter awook^t and herde hym synge 3364
 And spak^t vn to his wyf / and seyde anon
 What Alison / herestow noght Absolon
 That chaunteth thus / vnder oure boures wal [leaf 44, back]
 ¶ And she / answerde hir housbonde / ther with al 3368
 Yis god woot Iohā / I here it euerydel
 This passeth forth / what wol ye bet than wel
 ffor day to day / this ioly Absolon
 So woweth hire / þat hym is wo bigon 3372
 He waketh al the nyght^t and al the day
 He kembed his lokkes brode / and made hym gay
 He woweth hire by meenes / and brocage
 And swoor / he wolde been hir owene page 3376
 He syngeth brokkyng^t as a nyghtyngale
 He sente hir pyment^t Meeth / and spiced Ale
 And wafres pipyng hoot / out of the gleede
 And for she was of towne / he profred meede 3380
 ffor som folk / wol be wonnen for richesse
 And som for strokes / and som for gentilesse Vnde Ouidius
Ictibus Agrestis.
 Som tyme to shewe / his lightnesse and maistrye
 He pleyeth Herodes / vp on a scaffold hye 3384
 Bat what auailleth hym / as in this cas
 She loueth so / this hende Nicholas
 That Absolon / may blowe the Bukkes horn
 He ne hadde for his labour / but a scorn 3388
 And thus she maketh / Absolon hir Ape
 And al his earnest / turneth til a Iape
 fful sooth is this prouerbe / it is no lye
 Men se'th right thus / alwey the neighe slye 3392
 Maketh / the ferre leue to be looth
 ffor thogh þat Absolon / be wood or wrooth
 By cause / þat he fer was from hir sighte
 This neighe Nicholas / stood in his lighte 3396
 ¶ Now bere thee wel / thow hende Nicholas
 ffor Absolon / may waille / and synge allas

¶ And so bifel it' on a Saterdag
 This Carpenter / was goon til Osenay 3400
 And hende Nicholas / and Alison
 Acorded been / to this conclusiō
 That Nicholas / shal shapen hem a wile
 This sely Ialous housbonde / to bigile 3404
 And if so be / this game wente aright'
 She sholde slepen / in his arm al nyght'
 ffor this was hir desir / and his also [leaf 45]
 And right anoon / with-uten wordes mo 3408
 This Nicholas / no lenger wolde tarie
 But dooth ful softe / vn to his chambre carie
 Bothe mete and drynke / for a day or tweye
 And to hir housbonde / bad hir for to seye 3412
 If þat he axed / after Nicholas
 She sholde seye / she nyste wher he was
 Of al that day / she seigh hym nought with Iye
 She trowed / þat he was in maladye 3416
 ffor / for no cry / hir mayde koude hym calle
 He nolde answe're / for no thyng þat myghte falle
 ¶ This passeth forth / al thilke Saterdag
 That Nicholas / stille in his chambre lay 3420
 And eet' and sleepe / or dide what hym leste
 Til Sonday / þat sonne gooth to reste
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / hath greet meruaille
 Of Nicholas / or what thyng myghte hym aille 3424
 And seyde / I am adrad / by Seint Thomas
 It stondeth nat aright' with Nicholas
 God shilde / þat he deyde sodeynly
 This world is now / ful tikel sikerly 3428
 I seigh to day a corps / born to chirche
 That now a monday last' I seigh hym wirche
 Go vp quod he / vn to his knaue anoon
 Clepe at his dore / or knokke with a stoon 3432
 Looke how it is / and tel me boldely
 ¶ This knaue gooth hym vp / ful sturdily

And at the chambre dore / whil þat he stood
 He cryde and knocked / as þat he were wood 3436
 What how / what do ye maister Nicholay
 How may ye slepen / al the longe day
 But al for noght^t he herde nat a word
 An hole he foond / ful lowe vp on a bord 3440
 Ther as the Cat / was wont In for to crepe
 And at that hole / he looked In ful depe
 And atte laste / he hadde of hym a sighte
 ¶ This Nicholas / sat euere capyng vp-righte 3444
 As he hadde kiked / on the newe moone
 Adown he gooth / and tolde his maister soone
 In what array / he saw this ilke man [leaf 45, back]
 ¶ This Carpenter / to blessen hym bigan 3448
 And seyde / help vs seinte ffrideswyde
 A man woot litel / what hym shal bityde
 This man is falle / with his Astromye
 In som woodnesse / or in som Agonye 3452
 I thoghte ay wel / how þat it sholde be
 Men sholde noght knowe / of goddes priuete
 Ye blissed be alwey / a lewed man
 That noght^t but oonly his bileue kan 3456
 So ferde another clerk^t with Astromye
 He walked in the feeldes / for to pryde
 Vp on the sterres / what ther sholde bifalle
 Til he was / in a Marle pit yfalle 3460
 He saw nat that^t but yet by Seint Thomas
 Me reweth sore / for hende Nicholas
 He shal be rated / of his studyng^t
 If þat I may / by Ihesus heuene kyng^t 3464
 Get me a staf / þat I may vnder-spore
 Whil þat thow Robyn / heuest vp the dore
 He shal out of his studyng^t as I gesse
 And to the chambre dore / he gan hym dresse 3468
 His knaue / was a strong carl / for the nones
 And by the haspe / he haaf it vp atones

In to the floor / the dore fil anoon
 This Nicholas / sat ay as stille as stoon 3472
 And euere caped vp / in to the Eyr
 This Carpenter / wende he were in despeyr
 And hente hym / by the sholdres myghtily
 And shook hym harde / and cryde spitously 3476
 What Nicholay / what how looke adoun
 Awake / and thenk on Cristes passioun
 I crouche thee / from Elues and fro wightes
 Ther-with the nyght spel / seyde he anon rightes 3480
 On foure halues / of the hous aboute
 And on the thresshold / on the dore with-oute
 Ihesu crist and Seint Benedight
 Blesse this hous / from euery wikked wight 3484
 ffor the nyghtesuerye / the white Pater noster
 Where wentestow / seinte Petres suster
 And at the laste / this hende Nicholas [leaf 46]
 Gan for to sike soore / and seyde allas 3488
 Shal al the world / be lost eft soones now
 ¶ This Carpenter answerde / what seistow
 What thenk / on god / as we doon men þat swynke
 ¶ This Nicholas answerde / fecche me drynke 3492
 And after / wol I speke in pryuetee
 Of *certain* thyng / þat toucheth me and thee
 I wol telle it / noon oother man *certain*
 ¶ This Carpenter gooth down / and comth agayn 3496
 And broghte of myghty ale / a large quart
 And whan þat eech of hem / hadde dronke his part
 This Nicholas / his dore faste shette
 And doun the Carpenter / by hym he sette 3500
 And seyde / Ioĥn / myn hoost^t lief and deere
 Thou shalt vp on thy trouthe / swere me heere
 That to no wight^t thou shalt this conseil wreye
 ffor it is cristes conseil / that I seye 3504
 And if thou telle it man thou art forlore
 ffor this vengeaunce / thou shalt haue ther fore

That if thou wreye me / thou shalt be wood
¶ Nay Crist forbede it / for his holy blood 3508
Quod thou this sely man / I nam no labbe
And thogh I seye / I nam nat lief to gabbe
Sei what thou wolt I shal it neuere telle
To child ne wyf / by hym that harwed helle 3512
¶ Now Iohā quod Nicholas / I wol noght lye
I haue yfounde / in myn Astrologye
As I haue looked / in the moone bright
That now a monday next at quarter nyght 3516
Shal falle a reyn / and that so wilde and wood
That half so greet was neuere Nowels flood
This world he seyde / in lasse than in an hour
Shal al be dreyn't so hidous is the shour 3520
Thus shal man-kynde drenche / and lese hir lyf
¶ This Carpenter answerde / allas my wyf
And shal she drenche / allas myn Alisoun
ffor sorwe of this / he fil almoost adoun 3524
And seyde / is ther no remedie in this cas
¶ Why yis for gode / quod hende Nicholas
If thou wolt werken / after loore and reed [leaf 46, back]
Thow mayst noght werken / after thyn owene heed 3528
ffor thus seið Salomon / þat was ful trewe
Werk al by conseil / and thou shalt noght rewe
And if thou werken wolt by good consayl
I vndertake / with-outen mast or sayl 3532
Yit shal I saue hire / and thee and me
Hastow nat herd / how saued was Noe
Whan þat oure lord / hadde warned hym biforn
That al the world / with water sholde be lorn 3536
¶ Yis quod this Carpenter / ful yore ago
¶ Hastow nat herd / quod Nicholas also
The sorwe of Noe / with his felaweshipe
Er þat he myghte / gete his wyf to shipe 3540
Hym hadde leuere / I dar wel vndertake
At thilke tyme / than alle hise wetheres blake

That she hadde had a shipe / hir self allone
 And ther-fore / wostow what is best to done 3544
 This axeth haste / and of any hastyf thyng
 Men may noght preche / or maken taryng
 Anoon go gete vs faste / in to this In
 A knedyng trogh / or ellis a kymelyn 3548
 ffor eech of vs / but looke þat they be large
 In whiche we mowen swymme / as in a barge
 And han ther-Inne / vitaille suffisaunt
 But for a day / fy on the remenaunt 3552
 The water shal aslake / and goon away
 Aboute pryme / vp on the nexte day
 But Robyn may nat wite of this / thy knaue
 Ne eek thy mayde Gille / I may nat saue 3556
 Axe noght why / for thogh thou axe me
 I wol noght tellen goddes pryuetee
 Suffiseth thee / but if thy wittes madde
 To han as greet a grace / as Noe hadde 3560
 Thy wif shal I wel sauen / out of doute
 Go now thy wey / and speed thee heer aboute
 But whan thou hast / for hire and thee and me
 Ygeten vs / thise knedyng tubbes thre 3564
 Thanne shaltow hangen hem / in the roof ful hye
 That no man / of oure purueiance espye
 And whan thou thus hast doon / as I haue seyd [leaf 47]
 And hast oure vitaille / faire in hem yleyd 3568
 And eek an Ax / to smyte the corde atwo
 Whan þat the water cometh / þat we may go
 And breke an hole / an heigh vp on the gable
 Vn to the gardynward / ouer the stable 3572
 That we may frely / passen forth oure wey
 Whan þat the grete shour / is goon away
 Thanne shaltow swymme / as murye I vndertake
 As dooth the white doke / after his drake 3576
 Thanne woltow clepe / how Alison / how Iohn
 Be murye / for the flood wol passe anon

And thou wolt seyn / hail maister Nicholay
 Good morwe / I see thee wel / for it is day 3580
 And thanne shal we be lordes al oure lyf/
 Of al the world / as Noe and his wyf/
 But of o thyng / I warne thee ful right
 Be wel auysed / on that ilke nyght 3584
 That we been entred / in to shippes bord
 That noon of vs / ne speke noght a word
 Ne clepe ne crye / but been in his prayere
 ffor it is / goddes owene heste deere 3588
 Thy wyf and thou / mote hange fer atwynne
 ffor þat bitwix yow / shal be no synne
 Namooore in lookyng / than ther shal in dede
 This ordinaunce is seyde / go god thee spede 3592
 Tomorwe at nyght whan men been alle aslepe
 In to oure knedyng tubbes / wol we crepe
 And sitten there / abidyng goddes grace
 Go now thy wey / I haue no lenger space 3596
 To make of this / no lenger sermonyng
 Men seyn thus / seend the wise and sey no thyng
 Thow art so wys / it nedeth thee nat teche
 Go saue oure lyf and that I thee biseche 3600
 ¶ This sely Carpenter / gooth forth his wey
 fful ofte he seyde / allas and weylaway
 And to his wyf / he tolde his priuete
 And she was war / and knew it bet than he 3604
 What al this queynte cast was for to seye
 But natheles / she ferde as she wolde deye
 And seyde allas / go forth thy wey anon
 Help vs to scape / or we been dede echon 3608
 I am thy trewe / verray wedded wyf
 Go deere spouse / and help to saue oure lyf
 ¶ Lo which a greet thyng / is affeccion
 Men may dyen / of ymaginacion 3612
 So depe / may impression be take
 This sely Carpenter / bigynneth quake

[leaf 47, back]

Hym thynketh verrailiche / þat he may se
 Noes flood / come walwyng as the see 3616
 To drenchen Alison / his hony deere
 He wepeth / wailleth / maketh sory cheere
 He siketh / with ful many a sory swogh
 And gooth / and geteth hym a knedyng^t trogh 3620
 And after / a tubbe and a kymelyn
 And pryuely / he sente hem to his In
 And heeng hem / in the roof in priuete
 His owene hand / he made laddres thre 3624
 To clymben / by the ronges and the stalkes
 Vn to the tubbes / hangyng^t in the balkes
 And hem vitailed / bothe trogh and tubbe
 With breed and chese / and good ale in a Tubbe 3628
 Suffisyng^e right ynogh / as for a day
 But er þat he hadde maad / al this array
 He sente his knaue and / eek his wenche also
 Vp on his nede / to london for to go 3632
 And on the monday / whan it drogh to nyght^t
 He shette his dore / with-outen candel lyght^t
 And dressed alle thyng^t as it sholde be
 And shortly / vp they clomben alle thre 3636
 They seten stille / wel a furlong way
 Now Pater noster / clom seyde Nicholay
 And clum quod Iohn / and clum seyde Alison
 This Carpenter / seyde his deuocion 3640
 And stille he sit^t and biddeth his prayere
 Awaitynge on the reyn / if he it heere
 ¶ The dede sleepe / for wery bisynesse
 ffil on this Carpenter / right as I gesse 3644
 Aboute corfew tyme / or litel moore
 ffor trauaillyng of his goost^t he groneth soore
 And eft he routeth / for his heed myslay [leaf 48]
 ¶ Doun of the laddre / stalketh Nicholay 3648
 And Alison / ful softe adoun she spedde
 With-outen wordes mo / they goon to bedde

Ther as the Carpenter / is wont to lye
 Ther was the reuel / and the melodye 3652
 And thus lyth Alison / and Nicholas
 In busynesse of myrthe / and in solas
 Til that the belle of laudees / gan to ryng
 And freres in the chauncel / gonne synge 3656
 ¶ This parisshe clerk this amorous Absolon
 That is for loue / alwey so wo bigon
 Vp on the monday / was at Osneye
 With compaignye / hym to disporte and pleye 3660
 And axed vp on caas / a Cloistrer
 fful pryuely / after Iohn the Carpenter
 And he drogh hym a part out of the cherche
 And seyde I noot I saugh hym here noght werche 3664
 Sith Saterdag / I trowe þat he be went
 ffor tymber / ther oure Abbot hath hym sent
 ffor he is wont for tymber for to go
 And dwellen atte graunge / a day or two 3668
 Or ellis / he is at his hous certeyn
 Where þat he be / I kan noght soothly seyn
 ¶ This Absolon / ful iolyf was and lyght
 And thoghte / now is tyme to wake al nyght 3672
 ffor sikerly / I saugh hym noght stiryng
 Aboute his dore / syn day bigan to sprynge
 So mote I thryue / I shal at Cokkes crowe
 fful priuely / knocken at hys wyndowe 3676
 That stant ful lowe / vp on his boures wal
 To Alison / now wol I tellen al
 My loue longyng for yit I shal nat mysse
 That at the leeste wey / I shal hir kisse 3680
 Som manere confort / shal I haue parfay
 My mouth hath icched / al this longe day
 That is a signe of kysyng at the leeste
 Al nyght me mette eek / I was at a feeste 3684
 Therfore I wol go slepe / an houre or tweye
 And al the nyght than wol I wake and pleye

- ¶ Whan þat the firste cok' hath crowe anon [leaf 48, back]
 Vp rist / this ioly louere Absolon 3688
 And hym arrayeth gay / at point deuys
 But first / he cheweth grayn and likorys
 To smellen swete / er he hadde kembd his heer
 Vnder his tonge / a trewe loue he beer 3692
 ffor ther by / wende he to be gracious
 He rometh / to the Carpenters hous
 And stille he stant' vnder the shot wyndowe
 Vn to his brest' it raughte / it was so lowe 3696
 And ofte he cogheth / with a semy sown
 What do ye hony comb / swete Alisoun
 My faire bryd / my swete cynamone
 Awaketh lemman myn / and speketh to me 3700
 Wel litel thynken ye / vp on my wo
 That for youre loue / I swete ther I go
 No wonder is / thogh þat I swelte and swete
 I moorne / as dooth a lamb / after the tete 3704
 Ywis lemman / I haue swich loue longyng'
 That lyk a turtle trewe / is my moornyng'
 I may nat ete / namoore than a mayde
 ¶ Go fro the wyndow / Iakke fool she sayde 3708
 As help me god / it wol nat be com pa me
 I loue another / and ellis I were to blame
 Wel bet than thee / by Ihesu Absolon
 Go forth thy wey / or I wol caste a stoon 3712
 And lat me slepe / a twenty deuele wey
 ¶ Allas quod Absolon / and weilawey
 That trewe loue / was euere so yuel biset'
 Thanne kys me / syn þat it may be no bet' 3716
 ffor Ihesus loue / and for the loue of me
 ¶ Woltow thanne / go thy wey ther-with quod she
 ¶ Ye certes lemman / quod this Absolon
 ¶ Thanne make thee redy quod she / I come anon 3720
 [.
 no gap in the MS.]
 ¶ This Absolon / down sette hym on his knees

And seyde / I am a lord / at alle degrees 3724
 ffor after this / I hope ther cometh moore
 Lemman thy grace / and swete bryd thyn oore
 ¶ The wyndow she vndooth / and that in haste
 Hauē do quod she / com of and speed thee faste 3728
 Lest þat oure neghebores / thee espye [leaf 49]
 ¶ This Absolon / gan wipe his mouth ful drye
 Derk was the nyght^t as pych / or as the cole
 And at the wyndow / out she putte hir hole 3732
 And Absolon / hym fil no bet ne wers
 But with his mouth / he kiste hir naked ers *Nota malum quid*
 fful sauourly / er he were war of this
 Abak he sterte / and thoghte it was amys 3736
 ffor wel he wiste / a womman hath no berd
 He felte a thyng al rogh / and longe y-herd
 And seyde fy allas / what haue I do
 ¶ Te hee quod she / and clapte the wyndow to 3740
 And Absolon / gooth forth a sory paas
 ¶ A berd / a berd / quod hende Nicholas
 By goddes corpus / this gooth faire and wel
 ¶ This sely Absolon / herde euery del 3744
 And on his lippe / he gan for anger byte
 And to hym self / he seyde I shal thee quyte
 ¶ Who rubbeth now / who froteth now his lippes
 With dust^t with sond / with straw / *with* clooth / *with* chippes
 But Absolon / þat seith ful ofte allas
 My soule / bitake vn to Sathanas
 But me were leuere / than al this town quod he
 Of this despit^t awreken for to be 3752
 Allas quod he / allas I ne hadde ybleynt^t
 His hote loue was coold / and al yqueynt
 ffor fro that tyme / þat he hadde kist hir ers
 Of paramours / he sette noght a kers 3756
 ffor he was heelyd / of his maladye
 fful ofte paramours / he gan defye
 And weep / as dooth a child þat is ybete
 A softe paas / he went ouer the strete 3760

Vn til a smyth / men clepen daun Gerueys
 That in his forge / smythed plogh harneys
 He sharpeth shaar / and cultour bisily
 This Absolon / knokketh al esily 3764
 And seyde / vndo Gerueys and that anoon
 ¶ What who artow^s / it am I Absolon
 What Absolon / what Cristes swete tree
 Why rise ye so rathe / ey benedicitee 3768
 What eyleth yow / som gay gerl / god it woot^t [leaf 49, back]
 Hath broght yow thus / vp on the virtoot^t
 By Seinte note / ye woot wel what I mene
 ¶ This Absolon / ne roghte nat a bene 3772
 Of al his pley / no word agayn he yaf^t
 He hadde moore tow / on his dystaf^t
 Than Gerueys knew / and seyde freend so deere
 That hote cultour / in the chymenee heere 3776
 As lene it me / I haue ther-with to doone
 I wol brynge it thee / agayn ful soone
 ¶ Gerueys answerde / certes were it gold
 Or in a poke / nobles al vntold 3780
 Thow sholdest haue / as I am trewe Smyth
 Ey Cristes foo / what wol ye do ther-with
 ¶ Ther-of quod Absolon / be as be may
 I shal wel telle it thee / another day 3784
 And caughte the cultour / by the colde stele
 fful softe / out at the dore he gan to stele
 And wente / vn to the Carpenters wal
 He cogheth first^t and knokketh ther with al 3788
 Vp on the wyndow / right as he dide er
 ¶ This Alison answerde / Who is ther^s
 That knokketh so / I warante it a theef^t
 ¶ Wy nay quod he god woot^t my swete lief^t 3792
 I am thyn Absolon / my derelyng^t
 Of gold quod he / I haue thee broght a ryng^t
 My moder yaf it me / so god me saue
 fful fyn it is / and ther-to wel ygraue 3796

This wol I yeuen thee / if thow me kisse
 ¶ This Nicholas / was risen for to pisse
 And thoghte / he wolde amenden al the Iape
 He sholde kisse his ers / er þat he scape 3800
 And vp the wyndow / dide he hastely
 And out his ers / he putteth pryuely
 Ouer the buttok / to the haunche bon
 ¶ And ther-with / spak^t this clerk^t this Absolon 3804
 Spek swete herte / I noot noght wher thow art^t
 This Nicholas / anoon leet fle a fart^t
 As greet^t as it hadde been a thonder dent^t
 That with the strook^t he was almoost yblent^t 3808
 And he was redy / with his Iren hoot^t [leaf 50]
 And Nicholas / in the ers he smoot^t
 Of gooth the skyn / an handbrede aboute
 The hote cultour / brende so his toute 3812
 That for the smert^t he wende for to dye
 As he were wood / for wo he gan to crye
 Help water / water / help for goddes herte
 ¶ This Carpenter / out of his slomber sterte 3816
 And herde oon cryen water / as he were wood
 And thoghte allas / now cometh Nowelys flood
 He sette hym vp / with-oute wordes mo
 And with his ax / he smoot the corde atwo 3820
 And down gooth al / he foond neither to selle
 Ne breed ne ale / til he cam to the Celle
 Vp on the floor / and there aswowne he lay
 ¶ Vp stirte hire / Alison and Nicholay 3824
 And cryden out and harrow / in the Strete
 The neghebores / bothe smale and grete
 In ronnen / for to gauren on this man
 That aswowne lay / bothe pale and wan 3828
 ffor with the fal / he brosten hadde his arm
 But stonde he moste / vn to his owene harm
 ffor whan he spak / he was anon bore down
 With hende Nicholas and Alisoun 3832

They tolden euery man / þat he was wood
 He was agast so / of Nowelys flood
 Thurgh fantasie / þat of his vanytee
 He hadde ybought hym / knedyng tubbes thre 3836
 And hadde hem hanged / in the roof aboue
 And þat he preyde hem / for goddes loue
 To sitten in the roof / par compaignye
 ¶ The folk gan laughen / at his fantasye 3840
 In to the roof / they kiken and they cape
 And turned al his harm / vn to a Iape
 ffor what so / þat this Carpenter answerde
 It was for noght^t no man his reson herde 3844
 With othes grete / he was so sworn adoun
 That he was holden wood / in al the toun
 ffor euery clerk / anon right heeld with oother
 They seyde / the man was wood / my leue brother 3848
 And euery wight^t gan laughen at this stryf^t [leaf 50, back]
 Thus swyued / was the Carpenters wyf^t
 ffor al his kepyng^t and his Ialousye
 And Absolon / hath kist hir nether Iye 3852
 And Nicholas / is scalded in the toute
 This tale is doon / and god saue al the route

¶ ¶ Here is ended / the Millerys tale.

[No gap in the MS.]



¶ The prologe / of the Reunes tale

W Han folk hadde laughen / at this nyce cas
 Of Absolon / and hende Nicholas 3856
 Diuerse folk / diuersely they seyde
 But for the moore part they lowe and pleyde
 Ne at his tale I seigh no man hym greue
 But it were oonly / Osewold the Reue 3860
 By-cause he was / of Carpenters craft
 A litel Ire / is in his herte ylaft
 He gan to grucche / and blamed it a lite
 So the ik quod he / ful wel koude I thee quyte 3864
 With bleryng of a proud Millerys Iye
 If þat me liste / speke of rybaudye
 But ik am oold / me list no pleye for age
 Gras tyme is doon / my fodder is now forage 3868
 This white tope / writeth myne olde yerys
 Myn herte / is also mowled / as myne herys
 But if ik fare / as dooth an Openers
 That ilke fruyt is euer lenger the wers 3872
 Til it be roten / in Mollok / or in stree
 We olde men / I drede so fare we
 Til we be roten / kan we noght be rype
 We hoppe alwey / whil þat the world wol pipe 3876
 ffor in oure wil / ther stiketh ever a nayl
 To haue an hoor heer / and a grene tayl
 As hath a leek / for thogh oure myght be goon
 Oure wil desireth folie / euere in oon 3880
 ffor whan we may noght doon / than wol we speke
 Yet in oure asshen olde / is fyr yreke
 ffoure gleedes haue we / whiche I shal deuyse [leaf 51]
 Auauntyng lyyng Anger Coueitise 3884
 Thise foure sparkles / longen vn to eelde
 Oure lymes / mowe wel been vnweelde

But wil ne shal noght failen / that is sooth
 And yet I haue alwey / a coltes tooth 3888
 As many a yeer / as it is passed henne
 Syn þat my tappe of lyf / bigan to renne
 ffor sikerlik whan ik was bore anon
 Deeth drogh the tappe of lyf / and leet it goon 3892
 And euere sith / hath so the tappe yronne
 Til þat almoost / al empty is the tonne
 The stream of lyf / now droppeth on the chymbe
 The sely tonge / may wel ryng and chymbe 3896
 Of wrecchednesse / þat passed is ful yoore
 With olde folk / saue dotage is namoore
 ¶ Whan þat oure hoost hadde herd this sermonyng
 He gan to speke / as lordly as a kyng 3900
 He seyde / what amounteth al this wit
 What shal we speke al day / of holy writ
 The deuel made / a Reue for to preche
 Or of a Soutere / a Shipman / or a leche 3904
 Sey forth thy tale / and tarie noght the tyme
 Lo Depeford / and it is half wey pryme
 Lo Grenewych / ther many a sherewe is Inne
 It were al tyme / thy tale to bigynne 3908
 ¶ Now sires / quod this Osewold the Reue
 I pray yow alle / þat ye noght yow greue
 Thogh I answeere / and som del sette his howue
 ffor leueful is / with force / force of showue 3912
 This dronken Myllere / hath ytoold vs heer
 How þat / bigiled was a Carpenter
 Peraenture in scorn / for I am oon
 And by youre leue / I shal hym quyte anon 3916
 Right / in his cherles termes / wol I speke
 I pray to god / his nekke mote to-breke
 He kan wel / in myn eye / seen a stalke
 But in his owene / he kan noght scen a balke 3920

[No gap in the MS.]

A	T Trompyngton / nat fer fro Cantebrygge	Narratio
	Ther gooth a brook / and ouer that a brygge	
	Vp on the which brook / ther stant a Melle	[leaf 51, back]
	And this is verray soothe / þat I yow telle	3924
	A Millere was ther dwellyng many a day	
	As any Pecok ^t he was proud and gay	
	Pipen he koude / and fissehe / and nettes beete	
	And torne coppes / and wel wrastle and sheete	3928
	And by his belt ^t he baar a long Panade	
	And of a swerd / ful trenchaunt was the blade	
	A ioly poppere / baar he in his pouche	
	Ther was no man / for peril dorste hym touche	3932
	A Sheffield ^t thwitel / baar he in his hose	
	Round was his face / and camuse was his nose	
	As piled as an Ape / was his skulle	
	He was a Market betere / atte fulle	3936
	Ther dorste no wight ^t hand vp on hym legge	
	That he ne swoor / he sholde anon abegge	
	A theef he was for sothe / of corn and mele	
	And þat a sleigh / and vsant for to stele	3940
	His name was hoten / deynous Symkyn	
	A wif he hadde / comen of noble kyn	
	The person of the toun / hir fader was	
	With hire he yaf / ful many a panne a bras	3944
	ffor þat Symkyn / sholde in his blood allye	
	She was yfostred / in a Nonnerye	
	ffor Symkyn / wolde no wyf as he sayde	
	But she were wel ynorissed and a mayde	3948
	To sauen / his estaat of yemanrye	
	And she was proud / and peert as is a pye	
	A ful fair sighte / was it vp on hem two	
	On halidayes / biforn hire wolde he go	3952

With his tipet^t wounden aboute his heed
 And she cam after / in a gyte of reed
 And Symkyn / hadde hosen of the same
 Ther dorste no wight^t clepen hire but dame 3956
 Was noon so hardy / þat wente by the weye
 That with hire / dorste rage / or ones pleye
 But if he / wolde be slayn of Symkyn
 With panade / or with knyft^t or boydekyn 3960
 ffor Ialous folk / been perilouse eueremo
 Algate / they wolde hir wyues wenden so
 And eek / for she was som del smoterlich [leaf 52]
 She was as diyne / as water in a dich 3964
 And ful of hoker / and of bismare
 Hir thoghte / þat a lady sholde hir spare
 What for hir kynrede / and hir nortelrye
 That she hadde lerned / in the Nonnerye 3968
 A doghter hadde they / bitwix hem two
 Of twenty yeer / with outen any mo
 Sauyng a child / þat was of hal[f] yeer age
 In Cradel it lay and was a propre page 3972
 This wenche / thikke and wel ygrowen was
 With camuse nose / and eyen greye as glas
 With buttokes brode / and brestes rounde and hye
 But right fair was hir heer / I wol nat lye 3976
 ¶ The person of the toun / for she was so feir
 In purpos was / to maken hire his heir
 Bothe of his catel / and his Mesuage.
 And straunge he made it^t of hir mariage 3980
 His purpos was / for to bistowe hir hye
 In to som worthy blood of Auncetrye
 ffor holicherches good / moot been despended
 On holicherches blood / þat is descended 3984
 Therfore he wolde his holy blood honoure
 Thogh þat he / holy chirche sholde deuoure
 ¶ Greet sokne / hath this Millere out of doute
 With whete and malt^t of al the lande aboute 3988

And nameliche / ther was a greet Collegge
 Men clepeth / the soler halle of Cantebregge
 Ther was hir whete / and eek hir malt ygrounde
 And on a day / it happed in a stounde 3992
 Syk was this maunciple / on a maladie
 Men wenden wisly / þat he sholde dye
 ffor which this Millere / stal bothe mele and corn
 An hondred tyme / moore than biforn 3996
 ffor ther biforn / he stal but curteisly
 But now / he was a theef outrageously
 ffor which the wardeyn / chidde and made fare
 But ther-of / sette the Millere noght a tare 4000
 He craked boost / and swoor it was noght so
 Thanne were ther / yonge poure scolers two
 That dwelten in the halle / of which I seye [leaf 52, back]
 Testyf they were / and lusty for to pleye 4004
 And oonly / for hir myrthe and reuerye
 Vp on the wardeyn / bisily they crye
 To yeue hem leue / but a litel stounde
 To go to Mille / and seen hir corn ygrounde 4008
 And hardily / they dorste leye hir nekke
 The Millere / sholde noght stelen hem half a pekke
 Of corn by sleighte / ne by force hem reue
 And atte laste / the wardeyn yaf hem leue 4012
 Ioħn highte that oon / and Aleyn highte that oother
 Of oon town were they born / þat highte Strother
 ffer in the North / I kan noght telle where
 This Aleyn / maketh redy al his gere 4016
 And on an hors / the sak he caste anon
 fforth gooth Aleyn the clerk/. and also Ioħn
 With good swerd / and with bokeler by his syde
 Ioħn knew the wey / hym neded no gyde 4020
 And at the Mille / the sak adoun he layth
 ¶ Aleyn spak first al hayl Symkyn in fayth
 How fares thy faire doghter / and thy wyf
 ¶ Aleyn wel come / quod Symkyn by my lyf 4024

And Iohā also / how now / what do ye here
 ¶ By god quod Iohā / Symond nede has na peere
 Hym bihoues serue hym self / þat has na swayn
 Or ellis / he is a fool / as clerkes sayn 4028
 Oure maunciple / I hope he wol be deed
 Swa werkes ay / the wanges in his heed
 And ther-fore is I come / and eek Alayn
 To grynde oure corn / and carie it heem agayn 4032
 I pray yow / speed vs heythen / what ye may
 ¶ It shal be doon / quod Symkyn by my fay
 What wol ye doon / whil þat it is in hande
 By god / right by the hoper / wol I stande 4036
 Quod Iohā / and se how the corn gas In
 Yet saw I neuere / by my fader kyn
 How þat the hoper / wagges til and fra
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / Iohan wiltow swa 4040
 Thanne wol I be byneth / by my crown
 And se / how þat the mele falles down
 In to the trogh / that sal be my desport' [leaf 53]
 ffor Iohā in faith / I may been of youre sort' 4044
 I is as ille a Millere / as ar ye
 ¶ This Millere / smyled of hir nycetee
 And thoghte / al this nys doon / but for a wyle
 They wene / þat no man may hem bigile 4048
 But by my thrift / yet shal I blere hir Iye
 ffor al the sleighte / in hir Phislophye
 The moore queynte crekys / þat they make
 The moore wol I stele / whan I take 4052
 In stede of flour / yet wol I yeue hem bren
 The grettest clerkes / been noght the wisest men
 As whilom to the wolf thus spak the mare
 Of al hir art counte I noght a tare 4056
 Out of the dore / he gooth ful pryuely
 Whan þat he saugh his tyme / softely
 He looketh vp and down / til he hath founde
 The clerkes hors / ther as it stood ybounde 4060

Bihynde the Mille / vnder a leefsel
 And to the hors / he gooth hym faire and wel
 He strepeth of the bridel / right anon
 And whan the hors was laus / he gynneth gon 4064
 Toward the fen / ther wilde mares renne
 And forth with wehe / thurgh thikke and thenne
 This Millere gooth ayein / no word he seyde
 But dooth his note / and with the clerkes pleyde 4068
 Til þat hir corn / was faire and wel ygrounde
 And whan the mele / was sakked and ybounde
 ¶ This Iohā gooth out' and fynt his hors away
 And gan to crye / harrow and weilaway 4072
 Oure hors is lost'. Alayn for goddes banes
 Step on thy feet / com of man al atanes
 Allas oure wardeyn / has his palfrey lorn
 ¶ This Alayn al forgat' bothe mele and corn 4076
 Al was out of his mynde / his housbondrye
 What whilk wey is he gane / he gan to crye
 ¶ The wyf cam lepyng' Inward with a ren
 She seyde allas / youre hors gooth to the fen 4080
 With wilde mares / as faste as he may go
 Vnthank come on his hand / þat boond hym so
 And he þat better / sholde haue knyht the reyne [leaf 53, back]
 ¶ Allas quod Iohā / Aleyn for Cristes peyne 4084
 Lay down thy swerd / and I wol myn alswa
 I is ful wight / God waat' as is a ra
 By god hert' he sal nat scape vs bathe
 Why ne had thou / pit the capil in the lathe 4088
 Il hail / by god Alayn / thou is a fonne
 ¶ This sely clerkes / haan ful faste yronne
 Toward the fen / bothe Alayn and eek Iohā
 And whan the Millere seigh / þat they were gon 4092
 He half a busshel / of hir flour bath take
 And bad his wyf / go knede it in a cake
 He seyde I trowe / the clerkes were aferd
 Yet kan a Millere / maken a clerkes berd 4096

ffor al his art' ye lat hem goon hir weye
 Lo where he gooth / ye lat the children pleye
 They gete hym noght so lightly / by my croun
 ¶ Thise sely clerkes / rennen vp and down 4100
 With keep / keep / stand / stand / Iossa warderere
 Ga whistle thow / and I sal kepe hym heere
 But shortly / til þat it was verray nyght'
 They koude noght' thogh they dide al hir myght' 4104
 Hir capyl cacche / he ran alwey so faste
 Til in a dych / they caughte hym at the laste
 ¶ Wery and weet' as beest is in the reyn
 Comth sely Iohñ / and with hym comth Aleyn 4108
 Allas quod Iohñ / the day þat I was born
 Now ar we dryuen / til hethyng *and* til scorn
 Oure corn is stole / men wil vs foolis calle
 Bothe the wardeyn / and oure felawes alle 4112
 And namely the Millere / weilawey
 ¶ Thus pleyneth Iohñ / as he gooth by the wey
 Toward the Mille / and Bayard in his hond
 The Millere / sitting by the fyr he fond 4116
 ffor it was nyght' and ferther myghte they noght'
 But for the loue of god / they hym bisoght'
 Of herberwe and of ese / as for hir peny
 ¶ The Millere seide agayn / if ther be eny 4120
 Swich as it is / yet shal ye haue youre part'
 Myn hous is streyt' but ye han lerned art'
 Ye kan by argumentz / make a place [leaf 54]
 A myle brood / of twenty foot of space 4124
 Lat se now / if this place may suffice
 Or make it rowm with speche / as is youre gyse
 ¶ Now Symond seyde this Iohñ / by seint Cutberd'
 Ay is thou myrie / and that is faire answerd 4128
 I haue herd seye / men sal tak' of twa thynges
 Swilk as he fyndes / or tak' swilk as he brynges
 But specialy / I pray thee hoost deere
 Get vs som mete and drynke / and make vs cheere 4132

And we wol payen / trewely atte fulle
 With empty hand / men may none haukes tulle
 Lo heere oure siluer / redy for to spende
 ¶ This Millere in to town / his doghter sende 4136
 ffor ale and breed / and rosted hem a goos
 And boond hir hors / it sholde namoore go loos
 And in his owene chambre / hem made a bed
 With shetes and *with* chalons / faire yspred 4140
 Noght from his owene bed / but ten foot or twelue
 His doghter hadde a bed / al by hir selue
 Right in the same chambre by and by
 It myghte be no bet^r and cause why 4144
 Ther was no rowmer herberwe / in the place
 They soupen / and they speken / hem to solace
 And drynken euere stroong ale / at the beste
 Aboute mydnyght / wente they to reste 4148
 Wel hath this Millere / vernysshed his heed
 fful pale he was for-dronke / and noght reed
 He yexeth / and he speketh thurgh the nose
 As he were / on the quakke / or on the pose 4152
 To bedde he goth / and *with* hym goth his wyf
 As any Iay / she light was and iolyf
 So was hir ioly whistle / wel ywet^r
 The Cradel / at hir beddes feet is set^r 4156
 To rokken / and to yeue the child to sowke
 And whan *pat* drunken / al was in the Crowke
 To bedde wente / the doghter right anon
 To bedde gooth Aleyn / and also Iohn 4160
 Ther nas namoore / hem neded no dwale
 This Millere / hath so wisly bibbed ale
 That as an hors / he snorteth in his sleepe [leaf 54, back]
 Ne of his tayl bihynde / he took no keepe 4164
 His wyf bar hym / a burdon / a ful strong^r
 Men myghten hir routyng^r heren a furlong^r
 The wenche / routeth eek *par* compaignye
 ¶ Aleyn the cler^c that herde this melodye 4168

He poked Iohā / and seyde slepestow
 Herd thow euere / slyk a sang er now
 Lo swilk a conplyng / is ymel hem alle
 A wilde fyr / on thair bodyes falle 4172
 Wha herkned euere / swilk a ferly thyng
 Ye they sal haue / the flour of il endyng
 This lang^t night^t ther tydes me na reste
 But yet na force / al sal be for the beste 4176
 ffor Iohā seyde he / als euere moot I thryue
 If þat I may / yon wenche wol I swyue
 Som esement / has lawe shapen vs
 ffor Iohā / ther is a lawe / þat says thus 4180
 That gif a man / in a point be agreued
 That in another / he sal be releued
 Oure corn is stoln / soothly it is na nay
 And we han had / an ille fit to day 4184
 And syn I sal / haue naan amendement^t
 Agayn my los / I wil haue esement^t
 By goddes saule / it sal naan other be
 ¶ This Iohā answerde / Aleyn auyse thee 4188
 The Millere / is a perilous man he sayde
 And if þat he / out of his sleep abrayde
 He mighte doon vs bathe / a vileynye
 ¶ Aleyn answerde / I counte hym noght a flye 4192
 And vp he rist / and by the wenche he crepte
 This wenche lay vp righte / and faste slepte
 Til he so neigh was / er she myghte asprie
 That it hadde been / to late for to crie 4196
 And shortly for to seyn / they were at oon
 Now pley Aleyn / for I wol speke of Iohā
 ¶ This Iohā lith stille / a furlang wey or two
 And to hym self^t he maketh routhe and wo 4200
 Allas quod he / this is a wikked Iape
 Now may I seyn / þat I is but an ape
 Yet has my felawe / som what for his harm [leaf 55]
 He has the Milleris doghter / in his arm 4204

He auntred hym / and has his nedes sped
 And I lye / as a draf sak / in my bed
 And whan this iape / is told another day
 I sal ben halden / a daf a Cokenay 4208
 I wil arise and auntre it by my fayth
 Vnhardy is vnsely / thus men sayth
 ¶ And vp he roos / and softly he wente
 Vn to the Cradel / and in his hand it hente 4212
 And baar it softe / vn to his beddes feet
 Soone after this / the wyf hir routynt leet
 And gan awake / and wente hir out to pisse
 And cam agayn / and gan hir Cradel mysse 4216
 And groped heer and ther / but she foond noon
 Allas quod she / I hadde almoost mysgoon
 I hadde almoost goon to the clerkes bed
 Ey benedicite / thanne had I foule ysped 4220
 And forth she gooth / til she the Cradel fond
 She gropeth alwey / forther with hir hond
 And foond the bed / and thoghte noght but good
 By cause / þat the Cradel by it stood 4224
 And nyste wher she was / for it was derk
 But faire and wel / she creep in to the clerk
 And lyth ful stille / and wolde haue caught a sleepe
 With-Inne a while / this Iohn the clerk vp leepe 4228
 And on this goode wyf / he leyth on soore
 So murie a fyt ne hadde she nat ful yoore
 He priketh harde and depe / as he were mad
 This ioly lyf / han thise two clerkes lad 4232
 Til þat / the thridde cok bigan to synge
 ¶ Aleyn wax wery / in the dawenyng
 ffor he hadde swonken / al the longe nyght
 And seyde / fare wel Malyn swete wight 4236
 The day is come / I may no lenger byde
 But eueremo / wher so I go or ryde
 I is thyn awen clerk so haue I sel
 ¶ Now deere lemman quod she / go fare wel 4240

But er thow go / o thyng^e I wol thee telle
 Whan that thow wendest / homward by the Melle
 Right at the entree / of the dore bihynde (leaf 55, back)
 Thow shalt a Cake / of half a busschel fynde 4244
 That was ymaked / of thyn owene mele
 Which þat I heelp / my sire for to stele
 And good lemman / god thee saue and kepe
 And with that word / almoost he gan to wepe 4248
 ¶ Aleyn vp rist^e and thoghte er þat it dawē
 I wol go crepen In / by my felawe
 And fond the Cradel / with his hond anon
 By god thoghte he / al wrang I haue mysyon 4252
 Myn heed is toty / of my swynk to nyght^e
 That maketh me / þat I go noght aright^e
 I woot wel by the Cradel / I haue mysgo
 Here lyth the Millere / and his wyf also 4256
 And forth he gooth / on twenty deueleway
 Vn to the bed / ther as the Millere lay
 He wende haue copen / by his felawe Iohā
 And by the Millere / In he creep anoon 4260
 And caughte hym by the nekke / and softe he spak^e
 He seyde thou Iohā / thow Swyneshed awak^e
 ffor cristes saule / and here a noble game
 ffor by that lord / þat called is Seint Iame 4264
 As I haue thries / in this shorte nyght^e
 Swyued the Milleris doghter / bolt vp-right
 Whil thow hast^e as a coward been agast^e
 ¶ Ye false harlot^e quod the Millere hast^e 4268
 A false traytour / false clerk^e quod he
 Thou shalt be deed / by goddes dignytee
 Who dorste be so bold / to disparage
 My doghter / that is come of swich lynage 4272
 And by the throte bolle / he caughte Alayn
 And he hente hym / despitously agayn
 And on the nose / he smoot hym with his fest^e
 Doun ran the bloody stream / vp on his brest^e 4276

And on the floor / with nose and mouth tobroke
 They walwen / as doon two pigges in a poke
 And vp they goon / and doun agayn anoon
 Til þat the Millere / sporned on a stoon 4280
 And doun he fil / bakward vp on his wyf
 That wiste no thyng^t of this nyce stryf
 ffor she was falle aslepe / a litel wight^t [leaf 56]
 With Iohn the clerk / that waked hadde al nyght^t 4284
 And with the fal / out of hir sleepe she brayde
 Help holy cros of Bromholm / she sayde
 In manus tuas / lord to thee I calle
 Awake Symoñd / the feend is on me falle 4288
 Myn herte is broken / help I nam but ded
 Ther lyth oon vp on my wombe / and vp myn hed
 Help Symkyn / for the false clerkes fighte
 ¶ This Iohn sterte vp / as faste as euere he myghte 4292
 And graspeth by the walles / to and fro
 To fynde a staf / and she sterte vp also
 And knew the estres / bet than dide this Iohn
 And by the wal / a staf she foond anon 4296
 And saugh / a litel shymeryng of a light
 ffor at an hole / in shoon the moone bright^t
 And by that light^t she saugh hem bothe two
 But sikerly / she nyste who was who 4306
 But as she saugh / a whit thyng in hir Iye
 And whan she gan / this white thyng espye
 She wende the clerk^t hadde wered a voluper
 And with the staf / she drow ay ner and ner 4304
 And wende han hit / this Aleyn atte fulle
 And smoot the Millere / on the piled skulle
 That doun he gooth / and cryde harrow I dye
 Thise clerkes bette hym wel / and lete hym lye 4308
 And greithen hem / and tooke hir hors anon
 And eek hir mele / and on hir wey they gon
 And at the Mille / yet they toke hir cake
 Of half a busschel flour / ful wel ybake 4312

¶ Thus is the proude Millere / wel ybete
 And hath ylost^t the gryndyng of the whete
 And payed for the souper / euerydel
 Of Aleyn / and of Iohā / that bette hym wel 4316
 His wyf is swyued / and his doghter als
 Lo which it is / a Millere to be fals
 And ther-fore this prouerbe / is seyde ful sooth
 Hym thar nat wene wel / þat yuele dooth 4320
 A gilour shal hym self / bigiled be
 And god / that sitteth heighe in magestee
 Saue al this compaignie / grete and smale [leaf 56, back]
 Thus haue I quyt the Millere / in my tale 4324

¶ Here endeth the Reues tale. 𐀚

[*Small break in the MS.*]

¶ The prologe of the Cookes tale 𐀀

THe Cook' of London / whil the Reue spak'
 ffor ioye hym thoughte / he clawed hym on the bak'
 Haha quod he / for Cristes passion
 This Millere / hadde a sharpe conclusion 4328
 Vp on his argument' of herbergage
 Wel seyde Salomon / in his langage
 Ne bryng nat euery man / in to thyn hous
 ffor herberwyng' by nyghte is perilous 4332
 Wel oghte a man / auysed for to be
 Whom þat he broghte / in to his priuete
 I pray to god / so yeue me sorwe and care
 If euer sith / I highte Hogge of ware 4336
 Herde I a Millere / better yset awerk/
 He hadde a iape of malice / in the derk'
 But god forbede / that we stynten ^{hic} heere
 ffor if ye / vouche sauf to heere ^{audire} 4340
 A tale of me / that am a poure man
 I wol yow telle / as wel as euere I kan
 A litel iape / that fil in oure Citee
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / and seyde I graunte it thee 4344
 Now tel on Roger / looke that it be good
 ffor many a pastee / hastow laten blood
 And many a Iakke of Douere / hastow soold
 That hath been twies hoot' and twies coold 4348
 Of many a pilgrym / hastow Cristes curs
 ffor of thy persle / yet they fare the wors
 That they han eten / with thy stubbul goos
 ffor in thy shoppe / is many a flye loos 4352
 Now tel on / gentil Roger / by thy name
 But yet I praye thee / be nat wrooth for game
 A man may seye ful sooth / in game and pley
 ¶ Thow seist ful sooth / quod Roger by my fey 4356

But sooth pley quade pley / as the flemmyng seith	[leaf 57]
And ther-fore herry Bailly / by thy feith	
Be thou nat wrooth / er we departen heer	
Thogh þat my tale / be of an hostiler	4360
But nathelees / I wol nat telle it yit	
But er we parte / ywis thow shalt be quyt	
And ther with al / he lough / and made cheere	
And seyde his tale / as ye shal after heere	4364

[*Small break in the MS.*]

¶ Here bigynneth the Cook his tale.

A Prentis / whilom dwelled in oure Citee
 And of a craft' of vitailiers was he
 Gaillard he was / as goldfynch in the shawe
 Broun as a berye / a *propre* short' felawe 4368
 With lokkes blake / ykembd ful fetisly
 Dauncen he koude / so wel and iolily
 That he / was clepyd Perkyn Reuelour
 He was / as ful / of loue and paramour 4372
 As is the hyue / of hony swete
 Wel was the wenche / *pat with* hym myghte meete
 At euery bridale / wolde he synge *and* hoppe
 He loued bet the Tauerne / than the Shoppe 4376
 ffor / whan ther any ridyng' was in Chepe
 Out of the shoppe / thider wolde he lepe
 Til *pat* he hadde / al the sighte yseyn
 And daunced wel / he wolde noght come ageyn 4380
 And gadred hym / a meynee of his sort'
 To hoppe and synge / and maken swich disport'
 And ther / they setten steuene / for to meete
 To pleyen at the dees / in swich a streete 4384
 ffor in the town / nas ther no Prentys
 That fairer / koude caste a paire of dys
 Than Perkyn koude / and ther-to he was free
 Of his dispense / in place of pryuetee 4388
 That foond his maister wel / in his chaffare
 ffor ofte tyme / he foond his box ful bare
 ffor sikerly / a prentys reuelour
 That haunteth dees / ryot' or paramour 4392
 His maister / shal it in his shoppe abyen [leaf 57, back]
 Al haue he / no part of the Minstraleye
 ffor thefte and riot / they been conuertible
 Al konne he pleye / on Giterne / or Rubible 4396

Reuel and trouthe / as in a lowe degree
 They been ful wrothe al day / as men may see
 ¶ This ioly Prentys / with his Maister bood
 Til he were neigh / out of his prentishood 4400
 Al were he snybbed / bothe erly and late
 And som tyme / lad with reuel to Newgate
 But atte laste / his maister hym bithoghte
 Vp on a day / whan he his papir soghte 4404
 Of a prouerbe / that seith this same word
 Wel bet is roten appul / out of hoord
 Than þat it rotte / al the remenaunt
 So fareth it / by a riotous seruauunt 4408
 It is ful lasse harm / to lete hym pace
 Than he shende / alle the seruantz in the place
 Ther fore / his maister gaf hym acquitaunce
 And bad hym go / with sorw / and with meschaunce 4412
 And thus this ioly prentys / hadde his leue
 Now lat hym riote / al the nyght or leue
 And for ther nys no theef / with-oute a lowke
 That helpeth hym / to wasten and to sowke 4416
 Of that he brybe kan / or borwe may
 Anon / he sente his bed / and his array
 Vn to a compeer / of his owene sort
 That loued dees / and reuel / and disport 4420
 And hadde a wyf / that heeld for contenaunce
 A shoppe / and swyued for hir sustenaunce
 Of this Cokes tale
 maked Chaucer na
 moore [*in the left margin*]

[*Rest of the page blank.*]

APPENDIX TO GROUP A.



[THE SPURIOUS TALE OF GAMELYN.]

Her endeth o tale of the Cooke *and* [MS Reg. 17 D. xv.
leaf 66, back]
her folowyth a nother tale of the same cooke

L ythen *and* listeneþe *and* harkenep̃e Arigh̃te
 And ye schulne here of A dough̃ty knygh̃te
 Sir Iohan of Boundis was his name
 He coupe of norture And mocheff of game 4
 Thre sonnes þe knygh̃te hadde with his bodye wonne
 The eldeste was a mocche schrewe And soone he bigonne
 His breþerne louede wele her ffadre And of hym were Agaste
 The eldeste desaruede his ffaders Curse And hadde hitt atte
 The gode knygh̃te his ffadre lyuede so 3ore [þe laste
 That deþe was hym comen And handelede hym ffulle sore
 The gode knygh̃te carede sore syke þere he laye
 How his chyldron schulde lyuen Affter his daye [leaf 67] 12
 He hadde bene wyde where buttenon husbande he was [Reg. 17 D.
 xv. ends.]
 Aff the londe that he hadde it was purchas. [Harl. 1758, leaf 46,
 begins.]
 ffayn he wolde it were dressid among hem alle.
 That eche of hem had his part as it mygh̃t falle. 16
 Tho sent he in to contre after¹ wise knyghtis. [1 r. is for r.]
 To helpe delen his londis *and* dresen hem to rightis.
 He sent hem word bi lettres thei schulde hye blyue.
 Yf thei wolde speke with hym while he was on lyue. 20

Tho the knyghtis herden sike that he lay .
 Had thei no rest nother¹ nyght ne day . (1 NB. all r = MS r)
 Tift thei come to hym ther' he lay stille .
 On his deth bed to a-bide goddis wille . 24
 Then seide the good knyght sike ther' he lay .
 Lordis I yow warne for sothe with-out nay .
 I may no lenger lyuen here in this stounde .
 ffor thorough goddis will deth drawes me to grounde . 28
 Ther' nas non of hem alle that herde hym a right .
 That thei ne had routhe of that ilke knyght .
 And seiden sir/ for goddis loue ne dismay you noght .
 God may done bote of bale that is now wrought . 32
 Than spake the good knyght sike there he lay .
 Bote of bale god may sende I wot it is no nay .
 But I beseke you knyghtis for the loue of me .
 Goth *and* dressith my londis among' my sones thre . 36
 And for the loue of god delith not hem a mys .
 And foryeteth not Gamelyn my yong' sone that is .
 Taketh hede to that one as well as to that other .
 Seeld ye seen any heier' helpen his brother/./ 40
 Tho leten thei the knyght lyen that was not in hele .
 And wentyn in to counseile his londis for to dele .
 ffor to delen hem alle to oon that was here thoght .
 And for Gamelyn was yongist he schulde haue noght . 44
 All the londe that ther' was thei dalten it in two .
 And letyn Gamelyn the yong with-uten lond go .
 And eche of hem seide to other' full lowde .
 His brethren myght yeue hym londe when he good cowde .
 When thei had delid the londe at here wille . 49
 Thei comen to the knyght there he lay stille .
 And tolde hym a-non how thei had wrought .
 And the knyght ther' he lay likid it right noght . 52
 ¶ Than seide the knyght be seynt Martyn .
 ffor all that ye haue don yet is the londe myn .
 ffor goddis loue neighboris stondith stille .
 And I will delyn my lond right aftir' my wille . 56

Iohn my eldist sone schaff haue plowes fyue .
 That was myn fadris heritage while he was on lyue .
 And my myddlist sone fyue plowes of londe .
 That I halp for to gete with my right honde . 60
 And all myn other purchas of londis *and* ledis . [leaf 46, back]
 That I be-quethe Gamelyn *and* all my good stedis .
 And beseke you good men that lawe con of londe .
 ffor Gamelyns loue that my quest stonde . 64
 Thus dalt the knyght his londe bi his day .
 Right on his deth bed sike ther he lay .
 And sone aftirward he lay stoon stille .
 And died whan tyme come as it was cristes wille . 68
 A-noon as he was deed *and* vndir gras graue .
 Sone the eldir brother giled the yong knaue
 He toke in to his honde his londe *and* his lede .
 And Gamelyn hym self to clothen *and* to fede . 72
 He clothed hym *and* fedde hym yueff *and* eke wrothe .
 And lete his londis for-fare *and* his housis bothe
 His parkes *and* his wodis *and* dide no thyng welle .
 And sithen he it a-bought on his owne felle . 76
 So long was Gamelyn in his brothris halle .
 ffor the strengest of good will thei doutedyn hym alle .
 Ther was none ther yn nother yong ne olde .
 That wolde wrath Gamelyn were he neuyr so bolde . 80
 ¶ Gamelyn stood on a day in his brothers yerde .
 And bigan with his honde to hondiff his berde .
 He thought on his londis that lay vnsawe .
 And his faire okis that doune were drawe . 84
 His Parkis were broken *and* his dere reuyd .
 Of all his good stedis noon was hym bi-leuyd ./
 His housis were vn-hiled *and* full yueff dight
 Tho thought Gamelyn it went not a-right . 88
 Aftir-warde cam his brother walkyng thare .
 And seide to Gamelyn is our mete yare .
 Tho wrathed hym Gamelyn *and* swore bi goddis book .
 Thou schalt go bake thi self I will not be thi Cook . 92

Now brother Gamelyn how vnswarest thou now .
 Thou spakest neuyr' suche a worde as thou dost now .
 Be my feith seide Gamelyn now me thynketh nede .
 Of alle the harmes that I haue I toke neuyr' yet hede , 96
 My parkis/ ben broken *and* my deer' bi-reuyd .
 Of myn armes *and* my stedis noght is me bileuyd .
 Aft that my fadir' me bi-quath aft goth to schame .
 And therefore haue thou goddis curs brother' be thyn name ./
 Than spake his brother' that rape was of rees . 101
 Stonde stille gadlyng *and* holde thi pees .
 Thou schalt be fayn to haue thi mete *and* thi wede .
 What spekest thou gadlyng' of londe or of lede . 104
 Than seide Gamelyn the childe that was yeng' .
 Cristes curs mote he haue that clepeth me gadlyng .
 I am no worse gadlyng' ne no worse wight .
 But borne of a lady *and* geten of a knyght . [leaf 47]
 Ne dorst he not to Gamelyn neuer a foot go . 109
 But clepid to hym his men *and* seide to hem tho .
 Goth *and* betith this boy *and* reueth hym his witte .
 And lete hym lerne a nother' tyme to vnsware me bette .
 Then seide the childe yong' Gamelyn . 113
 Cristis curs mote thou haue brother' art thou myn .
 And if I schaff algate be betyn a-noon .
 Cristes curs mote thou haue but thou be that oon . 116
 And a-non his brother' in that grete hete .
 Made his men to fette staues Gamelyn to bete .
 When euery of hem had a staff nomen .
 Gamelyn was ware tho he sigh hem comen . 120
 Tho Gamelyn sigh hem comen he lokid ouer aft .
 And was war' of a pesteff stood vndir' the waft ./
 Gamelyn was light *and* thider' gon to lepe .
 And droff alle his brethers men right sone on an hepe 124
 And lokid as a wilde lion *and* leide on good wone .
 Tho his brother' sigh that he began to gone .
 He fleigh vp in to a lofte *and* schette the dore faste .
 Thus Gamelyn with his pesteff made hem alle a-gaste . 128

Some for Gamelyns loue and some for eie .
 Alle thei drowhen hem to halues tho he gan to pleie .
 What now seide Gamelyn euyt mote ye the .
 With ye begynne kontek' *and* so sone fle . 132
 Gamelyn sought his brother' whither' he was flowe .
 And saugh where he loked oute at a wyndowe .
 Brother' seide Gamelyn come a liteft nere .
 And I with teche the to pleie at the bokelere . 136
 His brother' hym answerde *and* seide be seynt Richere .
 While that pesteft is in thi honde I with come no nere .
 Brother' I with make thi pees I swere bi cristes ore
 Cast a-weie the pesteft *and* wrath the no more . 140
 I most nede seide Gamelyn wrath me at ones .
 ffor thou wolde make thi men to breke my bones .
 Ne had I had mayn *and* myght in myn armes .
 To haue putte hem fro me thei wolde haue do me harmes .
 ¶ Gamelyn seide his brother' be thou not wroth . 145
 ffor to seen the haue harme me it were right loth .
 I ne dide it noght brother' but for a fondyng .
 ffor to loken if thou art strong *and* art so yeng . 148
 Come a-doune then to me *and* graunt me my bone .
 Of oo thyng I with the axe *and* we schuft saught sone .
 Doune than come his brother' that fekiht was *and* felle .
 And was swithe sore a-ferd of the pesteffe . 152
 He seide brothir' Gamelyn axe me thi bone .
 And loke thou me blame but I it graunt sone ./
 Than seide Gamelyn brother' y-wis . [leaf 47, back]
 ¶ And we schuft be at one thou muste graunte me this .
 All that my fadir' me by-quath while that he was on lyue .
 Thou muste do me it haue yef we schuft not stryue . 158
 That schalt thou haue Gamelyn I swere be cristes ore .
 Aft that thi fadir' the by-quath though thou woldest haue
 Thi londe that lieth leye weft it schaft be sowe . [more .
 And thyn housis reisid vp that ben leide full lowe .
 Thus seide the knyght to Gamelyn with mouth .
 And thought on falsnes as he weft couth . 164

The knyght thought on treson *and* Gamelyn on noon.
 And wente and kissed his brother *and* whan thei were at
 Allas yong Gamelyn no thyng he ne wiste. [oon.
 With suche fals treson his brother hym kiste 168
 ¶ Lyitheneth *and* listeneth *and* holdith your' tonge.
 And ye schuff here talkyng of Gamelyn the yonge.
 Ther' was ther' be siden cried a wrastlyng'
 And therefore ther' was sette a Ram *and* a Ryng'./ 172
 And Gamelyn was in wiff to wende therto.
 ffor to preuyn hys myght what he coude do.
 Brother' seide Gamelyn be seynt Richere.
 Thou moste lene me to nyght a liteff cursere. 176
 That is fresch to the sporis on for to ride.
 I most on an erand a liteff here be side.
 Bi god seide his brother' of stedis in my stalle.
 Go *and* chese the the best spare noon of hem alle. 180
 Of stedis *and* of cursers that stonden hem be side.
 And telle me good brother' whider' thou wilt ride.
 Here be side brother' is cried a wrastlynge.
 And there fore schaff be set a Ram *and* Ryng. 184
 Moche worschip it were brother' to vs alle.
 Might I the Ram *and* the Ryng' bryngen home to this halle./
 A stede ther' was sadelid smertly *and* skete.
 Gamelyn dide a peire of sporis faste on his fete. 188
 He sette his foot in the stirop the stede he bi-strood.
 And toward the wrastlynge the yong' childe rood.
 Tho Gamelyn the yonge was riden oute at gate.
 The fals knyght his brother' loket yet aftir' thate. 192
 And besought ihesu crist that is heun' kyng'.
 He myght breke his nekke in that wrastlyng'.
 As sone a Gamelyn come there the place was.
 He light downe of his stede *and* stood on the gras. 196
 And there he herde a ffrankeleyn welaweie syng'.
 And bi-gan bitterly his hondis for to wryng'.
 Gode man seide Gamelyn whi makist thou this fare.
 Is ther' no man that may you helpen out of care. 200

Allas seide the ffrankeleyn that euyr I was bore .
 ffor twey stalworth sones I wene that I haue lore . [leaf 48]
 A Champion is in the place that hath wrought me sorowe .
 ffor he hath slayne my two sones but yef god hem borowe .
 I wolff yeue ten pounde bi ihesu criste *and* more .
 With the nones that I fonde a man to handle hym sore .
 Gode man seide Gamelyn wilt thou weff done .
 Holde my hors while my man draweth of my schone . 208
 And helpe my man to kepe my clothes *and* my stede .
 And I wiiff in to place gone to loke if I may spede .
 By god seide the ffrankeleyn it schaff be done .
 I wiiff my self be thi man to drawe of thi schone . 212
 And wende thou in to place ihesu criste the spede .
 And drede not of thi clothis ne of thi good stede .
 Barfoot *and* vngirt Gamelyn yn cam .
 Alle that were in the place hede of hym thei nam . 216
 How he dorste aunte hym to done his myght .
 That was so doughti a Champioun in wrastlyng *and* in fight .
 Vp sterte the Champion rapeli a-noon .
 Toward yong Gamelyn he bi-gan to goon . 220
 And seide who is thi fadir *and* who is thi sire .
 ffor sothe thou arte a gret footf that thou come here .
 ¶ Gamelyn answerde the Champion tho .
 Thou knewe weff my fadir while he couthe go . 224
 Whiles he was on lyue be seynt Martyn .
 Sir Ion of Boundis was his name *and* I Gamelyn .
 ffelawe seide the Champion so mote I thryue .
 I knewe weff thi fadir whiles he was on lyue . 228
 And thi self Gamelyn I wiiff that thou it here .
 While thou were a yong boy a moche schrewe thou were .
 Than seide Gamelyn *and* swore bi cristes ore .
 Now I am older wax thou schalt fynde me a more . 232
 By god seide the Champion weff come mote thou be .
 Come thou ones in my honde thou schalt neuer the .
 ¶ It was weff with-yn the nyght *and* the mone schone .
 When Gamelyn *and* the Champion to gider gon gone . 236

The Champion cast tornes to Gamelyn that was prest.
 And Gamelyn stood *and* bade hym done his best.
 Than seide Gamelyn to the Champioun.
 Thou art fast a-boute to bryng' me a-doun. 240
 Now I haue proued mony tornes of thyne.
 Thou most he seide proue oon or two of myne.
 Gamelyn to the Champion yede smertly a-none.
 Of all the tornes that he couthe he schewid hym but one.
 And kest hym on the lift side that thre ribbes to-brake.
 And therto his one arme that yaf a gret crake.
 Than seide Gamelyn smertly a-noon.
 Schaft it be holde for a cast or ellis for noon. 248
 By god seide the Champion whether' it be. [leaf 48, back]
 He that cometh ones in thi honde shaft he neuyr' the.
 Than seide the ffrankeleyn that had his sones there.
 Blessid be thou Gamelyn that euyr' thou bore were. 252
 The ffrankeleyn seide to the Champion on hym stood hym
 This is yong' Gamelyn that taught the this pleye. [noon eye.
 A-yen vnswarid the Champion that liked no thyng well.
 He is alther' maister' *and* his pleie is right fell. 256
 Sithen I wrastlid first it is gone yore.
 But I was neuyr' in my lyf handelid so sore.
 Gamelyn stood in the place a-non with-out serke.
 And seide if ther' be mo lete hem come to werke. 260
 The Champion that payned hym to wirke sore.
 Hit semeth bi his contenance that he wilft no more.
 Gamelyn in the place stood stift as stoon.
 ffor to a-bide wrastlyng' but ther' come noon. 264
 Ther' was non with Gamelyn that wolde wrastle more.
 ffor he handlid the Champion so wondirly sore.
 Two gentilt men yemed the place.
 Come to Gamelyn god yeue hym good grace. 268
 And seide to hym do on thi hosen *and* thi schoon.
 fforsothe at this tyme this faire is doon./
 And than seide Gamelyn so mote I well fare.
 I haue not yet hauyndelt sold my ware. 272

¶ Tho seide the Champion so brok I my swere.
 He is a fooþ that ther-of bieth thou sellest it so dere.
 Tho seide the frankeleyn that was in moche care.
 felaw he seide whi lakkest thou this ware. 276
 Be seynt Iame in Gales that mony man hath soght.
 Yet is it to good chepe that thou hast boght.
 Tho that wardeyns were of that wrastlyng.
 Come and brought Gamelyn the Ram *and* the Ryng^t. 280
 [.
 *no gap in the MS.*]
 A Gamelyn thought it was a faire thyng.
 And went with moche ioye home in the mornyng^t. 284
 His brother^r sigh where he came with the gret route.
 And bad schit the gate *and* holde hym with-oute.
 The porter^r of his lord was sore a-gast^t.
 And sterte a-noon to the gate *and* lokked it fast. 288
 ¶ Now litheþ *and* listeneth bothe yong *and* olde.
 And ye schuff here gamyn of Gamelyn the bolde.
 Gamelyn come to þ^e yate for to haue come yn.
 Than was it schit fast with a pyn. 292
 Than seide Gamelyn porter^r vndo the yate.
 ffor a gode mannes sone stondeþ ther-ate.
 Than answard the porter^r *and* sware bi goddis berde.
 Thou ne schalt Gamelyn come in to this yerde. 296
 Thou lixt^t seide Gamelyn so broke I my chyn.
 He smote the wiket with his foot *and* brake a-waye the pyn.
 The porter^r sigh tho it myght no better be. [leaf 49]
 He sette foot on erthe *and* be-gan to flee. 300
 Be my fay seide Gamelyn that traueile is lore.
 ffor I am on foote as light as thou haddist it swore
 Gamelyn ouer-toke the porter^r *and* his tene wrake.
 And girt hym in the nekke that the boon to-brake. 304
 And toke hym by that one arme *and* threwe hym in a welle./
 .Vij.^c fadome it was depe as I haue herd telle.
 Whan Gamelyn the yong^t thus had pleide his plaie.
 Alle that in the yeerde were drowen hem a-waie. 308

Thei dredyn hym full sore for werke that he wrought.
 And for the faire companye that he thider brought.
 Gamelyn yede to the yate *and* lete it vp wide.
 He lete yn alle that gone wolde or ride. 312
 And seide ye be welcome with-out any greue.
 ffor we will be maisters here *and* axe no man leue.
 Yestirday I left seide yong^r Gamelyne.
 In my brother seler fyue toun wyne. 316
 I will not this companye parten on twyn.
 And ye will don aftir me while sope is ther-yn.
 And if my brother gruche or make foule chere.
 Other of spence of mete *and* drynke that we spende here.
 I am our catour *and* bere our alther purs.
 He schaff haue for his grucchyng seynt Marie curs.
 Mi brother is a nygon I swere be cristes ore.
 And we will spende largely that he hath sparid yore. 324
 And who that maketh grucchyng that we here dwelle.
 He schaff to the porter in to the draw welle.
 Vij. daies *and* .vij. nyght Gamelyn helde his fest.
 With moche solace was there *and* non chest. 328
 In a litell toret his brother lay steke.
 And sigh hem waste his good *and* dorst not speke.
 ¶ Erly in a mornyng on the .viij. day.
 The gestis come to Gamelyn *and* wolde gone here way. 332
 Lordis seide Gamelyn will ye so hye.
 All the wyne is not yet dronke so broke I myn eye.
 Gamelyn in his herte was full wo.
 When his gestis toke here leue fro hym for to go. 336
 He wolde thei had dwellid lenger *and* thei seide nay.
 But bi-taught Gamelyn god *and* good day.
 Thus made Gamelyn his fest *and* brought it well to ende.
 And after his gestis toke leue to wende. 340
 ¶ Litheth *and* listenyth *and* holdith your tonge.
 And ye schuff here gamen of Gamelyn the yonge.
 Herkenyth lordyngis *and* listneth a-right.
 When alle gestis were gone how Gamelyn was dight. / 344

Aft the while that Gamelyn helde his mangerie . [leaf 49, back]
 His brothir' thought on hym be wreke with his trecherie .
 Tho Gamelyns gestis were riden *and* gone .
 Gamelyn stood a-none allone frend had he none . 348
 Tho aftir' felf sone with-yn a litiff stonde .
 Gamelyn was taken *and* full hard bonde .
 forth come the fals knyght out of the solere .
 To Gamelyn his brother' he yede full nere . 352
 And seide to Gamelyn who made the so bolde .
 ffor to stroien my stour' of my housholde .
 Brother' seide Gamelyn wrath the right noght .
 ffor it is mony day gone sith it was boght . 356
 ffor brother' þ^e profite/ thou hast had be seynt Richere .
 Of .xv. plowes of londe this sixtene yere .
 And of alle the bestis thou hast forth bredde .
 That my fadir' me bi-quath on his deth bedde . 360
 Of aft this sixtene yere I yeue the the prowē .
 ffor the mete *and* the drynke that we haue spendid nowe .
 Than seide the fals knyght euyff mote he the .
 Herken brother' Gamelyn what I wiſt yeue the . 364
 ffor of my body brother' here geten haue I non .
 I wiſt make the myn eire I swere bi seynt Ioħn .
 Parfay seide Gamelyn *and* it' so be .
 And thou thynkist as thou seist god yelde it the . 368
 No thyng' wist Gamelyn of his brother' gile .
 Therefore he hym bi-giled in a litiff while .
 Gamelyn seide he oo thyng I the telle .
 Tho thou threwe my porter' in the drawe welle . 372
 I swoor in that' wrath *and* in that gret moote .
 That thou schuldist be bounde both hond *and* foote .
 [.
 no gap in the MS.] 376
 ffor to holden myn a-vow as I the bi-hote .
 To ben myn heire of londe hous *and* cote .
 Brother' seide Gamelyn as mote I the .
 Thou schalt not be for-swore for the loue of me . 380

Tho maden thei Gamelyn to sitte for he schulde not stonde .
 Tilt thei had hym bounde bothe foot *and* honde .
 The fals knyght his brother' of Gamelyn was a-gast .
 And sent aftir' feters to feteren hym fast . 384
 His brother made lesyngis on hym there he stood .
 And tolde hem that comen yn that Gamelyn was wood .
 Gamelyn stode to a post bounden in the halle .
 Tho that comen yn lokid on hym alle . 388
 Euer stood Gamelyn euyn vp right' .
 But mete ne drynke had he non neither' day ne nyght .
 Than seide Gamelyn brother' be myn hals .
 Now I haue a-spied thou art a parti fals . 392
 Had I wist' the treson that thou hast founde ./
 I wolde haue yeue strokis or I had be bounde . [leaf 50]
 Gamelyn stoed bounde stille as ony stoon .
 Two daies *and* two nyghtis mete had he noon . 396
 Than seide Gamelyn that stoed y-bounde strong' .
 Adam spenser' me thynketh I fast to long' .
 Adam spenser' now I beseche the .
 ffor the moche loue my fadir' loued the . 400
 Yf thou may come to the keys lese me out' of bond .
 And I wilf parte with the of my fre lond .
 Than seide Adam that was the spenser' .
 I haue seruyd thi brother' this .xvj. yere . 404
 Yf I lete the goon out of his boure .
 He wolde saie aftirwarde I were a traitoure ./
 Adam seide Gamelyn so brok I myn hals .
 Thou schalt fynde my brother' at the last fals . 408
 Therefore brother' Adam lose me out of bondis .
 And I wilf parte with the of my fre londis .
 Vp suche forward seide Adam y-wis .
 I wilf do ther'to all that in me is . 412
 Adam seide Gamelyn as mote I the .
 I wilf holde the couenaunt *and* thou wilf helpe me .
 A-noon as Adams lord to bedde was goon .
 Adam toke the keyes *and* lete Gamelyn out a-noon . 416

He vnlokked Gamelyn bothe hondis *and* feet.
 In hope of auauncement that he hym bi-heet.
 Than seide Gamelyn thankid be goddis sonde
 Now I am lose bothe foot *and* honde. 420
 Had I now eten *and* dronken a-right./
 Ther' is noon in this hous schulde bynde me this nyght.
 Adam toke Gamelyn as stille as ony stoon.
 And lad hym in to spense raply a-noon. 424
 And sette hym to soper' right in a pryue stede.
 He bad hym do gladly *and* Gamelyn so dide.
 A-noon as Gamelyn had eten weft *and* fyne.
 And therto dronken weft of the rede wyne. 428
 Adam seide Gamelyn what is now thi reed.
 Or I go to my brother' *and* gird of his heed./
 Gamelyn seide Adam it schafft not be so.
 I con teche the a rede that is worth the two. 432
 I wote weft for sothe that this is no nay.
 We schufft haue a mangerie right on sonday.
 Abbotes *and* priours mony here schafft be.
 And other' men of holy chirche as I telle the. 436
 Thou schalt stonde vp bi the post as thou were bound fast.
 And I schafft leue hem vn-loke that a-weie thou may hem
 Whan that thei haue eten *and* waschen here hondis. [cast./
 Thou schalt biseke hem alle to bryng' the out of bondis.
 And if thei wift borow the that were good game. [leaf 50, back]
 Than were thou out of prison *and* I out of blame.
 And if eche of hem saie to vs nay.
 I schafft do a nother/ I swere be this day. 444
 Thou schalt haue a good staf *and* I will haue a nother/
 And cistes curs haue that oon that faileth that other/
 Ye for god seide Gamelyn I say it for me.
 If I faile on my side yueft mote I the. 448
 Yf we schufft algate assoile hem of here synne.
 Warne me brother' Adam whan we schufft be-gynne.
 Gamelyn seide Adam be seynt charite.
 I wift warne the biforn' whan it schafft be. 452

Whan I wynk on the loke for to gone .
 And cast a-weie thi feters *and* come to me a-none .
 Adam seide Gamelyn blessid be thy bones .
 That is a good counseile yeuen for the nones . 456
 Yf thei warne me to bryng me out of bendis .
 I wiff sette good strokes right on here lendis .
 Tho the sonday was comen *and* folke to the feste .
 ffaire thei were welcomed bothe leste *and* meste . 460
 And euer as thei at halle dore come yn .
 Thei cast here ye on yong^t Gamelyn .
 The fals knyght his brother^t full of trecherie .
 Alle the gestis that ther^t were at the mangerie . 464
 Of Gamelyn his brother^t he tolde hem with mouth .
 Aft^t the harme *and* the schame that he telle couth .
 Tho thei were seruyd of messis two or thre .
 Than seide Gamelyn how serue ye me . 468
 It is noght weft seruyd bi god that aft^t made .
 That I sitte fastyng *and* other^t men make glade .
 The fals knyght his brother^t ther^t as he stood .
 Tolde alle gestis that Gamelyn was wood . 472
 And Gamelyn stood stille *and* vnswared right noght .
 But Adams wordis he helde in his thoght .
 Tho Gamelyn gan speke deolfully with alle .
 To the gret lordis that seeten in the halle . 476
 Lordis he seide for cristes passion .
 Helpe to bryng Gamelyn out of prison .
 Than seide an Abbot sorow on his cheke .
 He schaff^t haue cristes curs *and* seynt maries eke . 480
 That the out of prison beggith or borow .
 But euer worth hym weft that doth the moche sorow .
 Aftir^t that abbot^t than spake a nother^t .
 I wolde thyn heed were of theigh thou were my brother^t .
 Alle that the borow foule mote hem falle . 485
 Thus thei seiden alle that were in the halle .
 Than seide a priour^t euyft^t mote he preue .
 It is gret sorow *and* care boy thou art on lyue . [leaf 51]

Ow seide Gamelyn so broke I my bone . 489
 Now I haue spied that frendis haue I none .
 Cursed mote he worth both flesch *and* blood .
 That euer doth priour' or Abbot any good . 492
 Adam the spenser' toke vp the cloth .
 And loked on Gamelyn *and* sigh that he was wroth .
 Adam on the pantrie litilt thought .
 But two good staues to the halle dore he broght . 496
 Adam loked on Gamelyn *and* he was ware a-none .
 And cast a-weie the fetters *and* bi-gan to gone .
 Tho he cam to Adam he toke the oon staf ,
 And bigan to worche *and* good strokes yaf . 500
 Gamelyn come in to the halle *and* Adam spenser' bothe .
 And lokid hem a-boute as thei had ben wrothe .
 Gamelyn spreyneth holi water' with a Oken spire .
 That some that stood vp right feft in the fire . 504
 Ther' was no lewid man that in the halle stood .
 That wolde do Gamelyn any thyng' but good .
 But stodyn be siden *and* lete hem both wirche .
 ffor thei had no reweth of men of holi chirche . 508
 Abbot or priour' Monk' or Chanoun .
 That Gamelyn ouertoke a-noon thei yeden doun .
 Ther' was non of alle that with his staf mette .
 That he made hem ouerthrowe *and* quyt hem his dette . 512
 Gamelyn seide Adam for seynt charite .
 Paie good lyueray for the loue of me .
 And I wilff kepe the dore so euer here I masse ./
 Er' thei ben assoiled ther' schaff noon passe . 516
 Doute the noght seide Gamelyn while we ben in fere .
 Kepe thou weff the dore *and* I wilff worche here .
 By-stere the good Adam *and* let ther' non fle .
 And we schuff telle largely how mony that ther' be . 520
 Gamelyn seide Adam do hem but good .
 Thei ben men of holy chirche drawe of hem no blood .
 Saue weff the crowne *and* do hem no harmes .
 But breke both her' leggis *and* sithen her' armes . 524

Thus Gamelyn *and* Adam wrought right fast .
 And pleide with the monkis *and* made hem a-gast .
 Thider^r thei come rydyng^r ioly with swaynes .
 And home a-yen thei were lad in cartis *and* waynes . / 528
 Tho thei hadden alle y-doo. then seide a gray frere .
 Alas sir^r Abbot what dide we now here .
 Tho that we comen hider/ it was a colde reede .
 Vs hadde ben better^r at home with water^r *and* with breede .
 While Gamelyn made ordris of monkis *and* frere . 533
 Euyr^r stood his brother^r *and* made foule chere .
 Gamelyn vp with his staf that he weft knew . [leaf 51, back]
 And girt^r hym in the nek that he ouer threw . 536
 A litlff a-boue the girdlff the rigge boon to-brast .
 And sette hym in the fetters ther^r he satt arst .
 Sitte there brother^r seide Gamelyn .
 ffor to colen thi body as I dide myn . 540
 As swithe as thei haddyn wroken hem on her^r foon .
 Thei asked water^r *and* waschen a-noon .
 What some for her^r loue *and* some for her^r awe .
 Alle the seruauantis scrueeth hem of the best lawe . 544
 ¶ The Schereue was thenne but fyue myle .
 And aft^r was tolde hym in a litelff while .
 How Gamelyn *and* Adam haden doone a sory res .
 Bounden *and* wounden men a-yens the kyngis pes . 548
 Tho bi-gan sone strif for to wake .
 And the Schireue a-boute Gamelyn for to take .
 ¶ Now lithe^r *and* listneth so god yeue you good fyne .
 And ye schuiff here good game of yong Gamelyne . 552
 ffoure *and* twenti yong^r men that helden hem full bolde .
 Come to the schireue *and* seide that thei wolde .
 Gamelyn *and* Adam fette bi her^r fay .
 The Schirreue yeue hem leue soth for to say . 556
 Thei hyeden fast wolde thei not lynne .
 Tilt thei come to the gate there Gamelyn was ynne .
 Thei knockeden on the gate the porter^r was nyghe .
 And lokid out at an hole as man that was slighe . 560

The porter' had biholde hem a litufl while.
 He louyd wefl Gamelyn *and* was drad of gile.
 And lete the wiket stond fufl stille.
 And asked hem with-oute what was here wille. 564
 ¶ ffor alle the gret companye than spak but oon.
 Vndo the gate porter' *and* lete vs yn goon.
 Than seide the porter' so brouke I my chyn.
 Ye schufl saie your' erand yer' ye come yn. 568
 Saie to Gamelyn *and* Adam yf theire wifl be
 We wifl speke with hem two wordes or thre.
 ffelaw seide the porter stonde there stille.
 And I wifl wende to Gamelyn to wite his wille. 572
 In wente the porter' to Gamelyn a-noon.
 And seide sir' I warne you here be comen your' foon.
 The Schereuys men ben atte the gate.
 ffor to take you both schufl ye not scape. 576
 Porter' seide Gamelyn so mote I wefl the.
 I wifl allow the thi wordis when I my tyme se.
 Go a-geyn to the gate *and* dwelle with hem a while.
 And thou schalt se right sone porter' a gile. 580
 Adam seide Gamelyn loke the to gone.
 We haue foo-men atte yate *and* frendis neuer one. [leaf 52]
 Hit ben the Schereuys men that hider' ben come.
 Thei be swore to-gider' that we schaff be nome. 584
 Gamelyn seide Adam hye the right blyue.
 And if I faile the this day euyfl mote I thryue.
 And we schufl so welcome the Schereuys men.
 That some of hem schaff make here beddis in the fen. 588
 At a posterne gate Gamelyn out went.
 And a good cartstaf in his honde hent.
 Adam hent sone a nother' gret staf.
 ffor to helpen Gamelyn *and* good strokis yaf. 592
 Adam fefl tweyne *and* Gamelyn fefl thre.
 The other' sette feet on erthe *and* bi-gan to fle.
 What seide Adam so euyr' here I masse
 I haue right good wyne drynke or ye passe. 596

Nay bi god seide thei thi drynke is not good .
 It wolde make a mannes brayn to lyen in his hood .
 Gamelyn stood stille *and* lokid hym a-boute .
 And seide the schereue cometh with a gret route . 600
 Adam seide Gamelyn what ben now thi redis .
 Here cometh the schereue *and* wiff haue our' hedis .
 Adam seide to Gamelyn myn rede is now this .
 A-bide we no lenger' lest we fare a-mys . 604
 I rede that we to wode gone or that we be founde .
 Better' is there louse than in towne be bounde .
 Adam toke bi the honde yong' Gamelyne ./
 And euery of hem drank a draught of wyne ./ 608
 And after' token her' cours *and* wenten her' way .
 Tho fonde the schereue nest but non ay .
 The schereue light down *and* wente in to halle .
 And fonde the lorde feterid fast with alle . 612
 The schereue vnfeterid hym right sone a-noon .
 And sent afir' a leche to hele his rigge boon .
 ¶ Lete we now the fals knyght lie in his care .
 And talke we of Gamelyn *and* loke how he fare . 616
 Gamelyn in to the wode stalkid stille .
 And Adam spenser' liked this ille .
 Adam swore to Gamelyn be seynt Richere .
 Now I se it is mery to be a spensere . 620
 That leuyr' me were keies to bere .
 Than walken in this wilde wode my clothis to tere .
 Adam seide Gamelyn dismay the right nought .
 Mony a good mannys childe in care is brought . 624
 As thei stood talkyng' bothen in fere .
 Adam herde talkyng of men *and* nygh hem thought thei
 Tho Gamelyn vndir' wode lokid a-right . [were .
 Seuy'n score of yong men he sigh weff dight . 628
 Alle sate at the mete compas a-boute . [leaf 52, back]
 Adam seide Gamelyn now haue I no doute .
 After' bale cometh bote thorough goddis myght .
 Me thynke of mete *and* drynke I haue a sight . 632

Adam loked tho vndir' wode bough.
 And tho he say mete *and* he was glad y-nough.
 ffor he hoped to god to haue his dele.
 And he was sore a-longed after' a good mele. 636
 As he seide that worde the maister' outlawe.
 Saugh Adam *and* Gamelyn vndir' wode schawe.
 Yonge men seide the maister' bi the good rode.
 I am war' of gestis god sende vs gode. 640
 Yonde ben two yonge men well a-dight.
 And *per*auenture ther' ben more who so lokid a-right.
 A-riseth vp yong' men *and* fette hem to me.
 It is good that we witen what men thei be. 644
 Vp ther' stertyn seuene fro the dyner'.
 And metten with Gamelyn *and* Adam spenser'.
 Whan thei were nyghe hem than seide that one.
 Yeldeth vp yonge men your' bowes *and* your' flone. 648
 Than seide Gamelyn that yong was of elde.
 Moche sorow mote thei haue that to you hem yelde.
 I course non other' but right my selue.
 Thei ye fette to you fyue than be ye twelue. 652
 Tho thei herde bi his worde that myght was yn his arme.
 Ther' was non of hem that wolde do hem harme.
 But seide to Gamelyn myldely *and* stille.
 Come a-fore our' maister' *and* say to hym thi wille. 656
 Yonge men seide Gamelyn be your' lewte.
 What man is your' maister' that ye with be.
 Alle thei answerde with-oute lesyng.
 Our' maister' is crowned of outlawis kyng. 660
 Adam seide Gamelyn go we in cristes name.
 He may neither' mete ne drynke werne vs for schame.
 Yf that he be hende *and* come of gentilt blood. 663
 He wilf yeue vs mete *and* drynke *and* do vs some good.
 Be seynt Iame seide Adam what harme that I gete.
 I wilf auenture me that I had mete.
 Gamelyn *and* Adam went forth in fere.
 And thei grette the maister / that thei fonde there. 668

¶ Than seide the maister / kyng of outlawes .
 What seke ye yonge men vndir' wode schawes .
 Gamelyn answerde . the kyng with his crowne . 671
 He most nedis walke in felde that may not walke in towne .
 Sire we walke not here non harme to do .
 But if we mete a deer' to schete therto .
 As men that ben hungry *and* mow no mete fynde .
 ¶ And ben hard be-stad vndir' wode lynde . (leaf 53) 676
 Of Gamelyn wordis the maister' had reuthe .
 And seide ye schaff haue y-nogh haue god my treuthe .
 He bad hem sitte down for to take reste .
 And bad hem ete *and* drynke *and* that of the beste . 680
 As thei eten *and* dronken welth *and* fyne .
 Than seide oon to a nother' this is Gamelyne .
 Tho was the maister' outlawe in to counseile nome ./
 And tolde how it' was Gamelyn that thider' was come . 684
 A-non as he herde how it was be-falle .
 He made hym maister' vndir' hym ouer hem alle .
 With-yn the thrid wike hym come tithyng' .
 Tho the maister' outlawe that was her' kyng' . 688
 That he schulde come home his pees was made .
 And of that good tithyng' he was full glade .
 Tho seide he to his yong' men soth for to telle .
 Me ben comen tithynges I may no lenger' dwelle ./ 692
 Tho was Gamelyn a-non with-oute taryng' .
 Made maister' outlawe *and* crowned her' kyng' .
 Tho was Gamelyn crowned kyng of outlawes .
 And walkid a while vndir' wode schawes . 696
 ¶ The fals knyght his brother' was schereue *and* sire .
 And lete his brother' endite for hate *and* for hire .
 Tho were his bonde-men sory *and* no thyng' glade . 699
 When Gamelyn her' lorde wolves heed was cried *and* made .
 And sent out of his men where thei myght hym fynde .
 ffor to go seke Gamelyn vndir' wode lynde .
 To telle hym tithyng the wynde was went .
 Aft his good reuyd *and* alle his men schent . 704

Whan thei hadden hym founde on knees thei hem setten.
 And a-down with here hood *and* her' lorde gretten.
 Sir' wrath yow nought for the good rode.
 ffor we han brought you tithyng but thei be not gode. 708
 Now is thi brother' schereue *and* hath the baillie.
 And hath endited the *and* wolfes heed doth the crie.
 Allas seide Gamelyn that euer I was so slak'.
 That I ne had broke his nekke tho I his rigge brak. 712
 Goth greteth well bope/ housbonde/ *and* wif.
 I wil be at the next schire haue god my lyf.
 Gamelyn cam redy to the next schire.
 And ther' was his brother' both lorde *and* sire. 716
 Gamelyn boldely come in to the mote halle.
 And put a-down his hood amonge the lordis alle.
 God saue you lordynges that here be.
 But broke bak schereue euyff mote thou the. 720
 Whi hast thou do me that schame *and* vilonye.
 ffor to late endite me *and* wolfesheed do me crie ./
 Tho thought the fals knyght for to ben a-wreke. [leaf 53, back]
 And let' Gamelyn most he no thyng' speke. 724
 Might' ther' be no grace but Gamelyn at the last.
 Was cast in prison *and* feterid fast ./
 Gamelyn hath a brother/ that hight sir' Ote.
 As a good a knyght *and* hende as myght gon on fote. 728
 A-non yede a messenger' to that good knyght.
 And tolde hym aff to-gider' how Gamelyn was dight.
 A-non as sire Ote herde how Gamelyn was dight.
 He was right sory was he no thyng light. 732
 And lete sadiff a stede *and* the way he name.
 And to his tweie bretheryn right sone he came.
 Sire seide sir' Ote to the schereue tho.
 We ben but thre bretheren schuff we neuer be mo. 736
 And thou hast prisoned the best of vs alle.
 Suche a nother' brother' euyff mote hym bi-falle.
 Sir' Ote seide the fals knyght late be thi curs/.
 By god for thi wordis he schaff fare the wurs. 740

To the kyngis prison he is y-nome .
 And there he schaff a-bide til the iustice come .
 Parde seide sir Ote bettir it schaff be .
 I bid hym to maympris that thou graunte me . 744
 Tilt the next sitting of delyueraunce .
 And late than Gamelyn stonde to his chaunce .
 Brother in suche a forwarde I take hym to the .
 And by my fadris soule that the bigat *and* me . 748
 But he be redy whan the iustice sitte ./
 Thou schalt bere the iugement for all thi gret witte .
 I graunte weill seide sir Ote that it so be .
 Late delyuer hym a-non *and* take hym to me . 752
 Tho was Gamelyn delyuered to sir Ote his brother .
 And that nyght dwellid the oon with the other .
 On the morowen seide Gamelyn to sir Ote the hende .
 Brother he seide I mote for sothe fro you wende . 756
 To loke how my yong men leden here lyf .
 Whethir thei lyuen in ioi or ellis in strif .
 By god seide sir Ote that is a colde rede .
 Now I see that alle the carke schaff fall on my hede . 760
 ffor whan the Iustice sitte *and* thou be not founde .
 I schaff a-non be take *and* in thi stede y-bounde .
 Brother seide Gamelyn dismaie the noght .
 ffor bi seynt Iame in Galis that mony man hath sought . 764
 Yf that god Almyghty holde me my lyf *and* my witte .
 I will be redy whan the iustice sitte .
 Than seide sir Ote to Gamelyn god schilde the fro schame .
 Come when thou seist tyme *and* bryng vs oute of blame .
 Litheth *and* listneth *and* hold yow stille ./ 769
 And ye schuff here how Gamelyn had his wille . [leaf 54]
 Gamelyn wente vndir wode rys .
 And fonde ther plaiyng yong men of prys . 772
 Tho was yong Gamelyn right glad y-noghe .
 When he fonde his men vndir wode boghe .
 Gamelyn *and* his men talkeden in fere .
 And thei had good game here maister to here . 776

His men tolde hym of auenturis that thei had founde .
 And Gamelyn hem tolde a-yen how he was fast bounde .
 While Gamelyn was outlawe had he no cors .
 Ther' was no man that for hym ferde the wors . 780
 But Abbotis *and* priours monk *and* Chanon .
 On hem left he noght when he myght hem nome .
 While Gamelyn *and* his men made myrthes ryue .
 The fals knyght his brother' euyt mote he pryue . 784
 ffor he was fast a-boute bothe day *and* other .
 ffor to hire the quest' to hangen his brother/
 ¶ Gamelyn stood on a day *and* behelde .
 The wodis *and* the schawis *and* the wilde filde . 788
 He thought on his brother' how he hym be-hette .
 That he wolde be redy whan the iustice sette .
 He thought weyt he wolde with-oute delay .
 Come a-fore the iustice to kepen his day . 792
 And seide to his yong men dighteth you yare .
 ffor whan the iustice sitte we moste be thare .
 ffor I am vndir' borow til that I come .
 And my brother' for me to prison schaff be nome . 796
 Be seynt Iame seide his yong men *and* thou rede therto .
 Ordeyne how it' schaff be *and* it schaff be do .
 While Gamelyn was comyng ther' the iustice satte .
 The fals knyght his brother' for-yate he not that . 800
 To hire the men on his quest to hangen his brother' .
 Thogh thei had not the oon thei wolde haue the other' .
 Tho come Gamelyn fro vndir' the wode rys .
 And broght with hym yong' men of prys . 804
 I se weyt seide Gamelyn the Iustice is sette .
 Go a-forn Adam *and* loke how it spette .
 Adam went in to the halle *and* loked aft a-boute .
 He sigh ther' stonde lordis grete *and* stoute . 808
 And sir' Ote his brother' feterid full faste .
 Tho went Adam oute of halle as he were a-gaste .
 Adam seide to Gamelyn *and* to his felawis alle .
 Sir' Ote stant feterid in the mote halle ./ 812

[.
 no gap in the MS.]

Yf god yeue vs grace weſt for to do .

He ſchaft it a-bigge that it brought ther³-to . 816

Than ſeide Adam that lokkes had hore ./

Criſtes curs mote he haue that hym bond ſo ſore .

And thou wilt Gamelyn do aftir³ my rede . (leaf 54, back)

Ther³ is non in the halle ſchaft bere a-wey his hede . 820

Adam ſeide Gamelyn we wiſt not do ſo .

We wiſt ſle the giltif *and* late the other³ go .

I wiſt in to the halle *and* with the Juſtice ſpeke .

On hem that ben giltif I wiſt ben a-wreke . 824

Lete non ſcape at the dore take yong men yeme

ffor I wiſt be Juſtice this day domes to deme .

God ſpele me this day at my newe werke .

Adam come with me for thou ſchaft be my clerke . 828

His men vnſwareden hym *and* bad hym done his beſte .

And if thou to vs haue nede thou ſchaft fynde vs preſte .

We wiſt ſtonde with the while that we may dure .

And but we wirken manly pay vs non hure . 832

Yonge men ſeide Gamelyn ſo mote I weſt the ./

As truſti a maister³ ye ſchaft fynde me .

Right there the Juſtice ſatte in the halle

In went Gamelyn amongis hem alle . 836

Gamelyn lete vnfeter his brother³ out of bende .

Than ſeide ſir³ Ote his brother³ that was hende .

Thou haddiſt almoſt Gamelyn dwellid to longe .

ffor the queſt is oute on me that I ſchulde be honge . 840

Brother / ſeide Gamelyn ſo god yeue me good reſt .

This day thei ſchuſt ben hanged that ben on the queſt .

And the Juſtice bothe that is the Iuge man .

And the ſchereue bothe thorgh hym it be-gan . 844

¶ Than ſeide Gamelyn to the Juſtice .

Now is thi power³ done thou moſt nedis riſe .

Thou haſt yeuyn domyb that ben yueſt dight .

I wiſt ſitten in thi ſete *and* dresſen hem a-right³ . 848

The Iustice sate stille *and* ros not a-non .
 And Gamelyn in haste cleuyd his cheke bon .
 Gamelyn toke hym in his armys *and* no more spak .
 But threw him ouer the barre *and* his arme brak . 852
 Durst non to Gamelyn saie but good .
 ffor ferd of the companye that with hym oute stood .
 Gamelyn sette hym down in the Iustice sete .
 And sir' Ote his brother' bi hym *and* Adam at his fete . 856
 Whan Gamelyn was sette in the Iustice stide .
 Herken of a bourde that Gamelyn dide .
 He lete feter' the Iustice *and* his fals brother/
 And lete hem come to the barre that oon with that other/./
 Tho Gamelyn had thus done had he no rest . 861
 Tilt he had enquerid who was on the quest .
 ffor to demyn his brother' sir' Ote for to honge .
 Er he wiste whiche thei were hym thocht full longe . 864
 But as sone as Gamelyn wiste where thei were .
 He dide hem euerychon feter' in fere . [leaf 55]
 And bryngen hem to the barre *and* setten hem in rewe .
 Be my feith seide the Iustice the schereue is a schrewe .
 Than seide Gamelyn to the Iustice . 869
 Thou hast yeue domes of the worste assise .
 And the .xij. sisouris that weren on the quest .
 They schult be hangid this day so haue I good rest . 872
 Than seide the schereue to yong Gamelyn .
 Lorde I crie the mercy brother' art thou myn .
 Therefore seide Gamelyn haue thou cristes curs .
 ffor *and* thou were mayster' yet schulde I haue wurs . 876
 ffor to make schort tale *and* noght to longe .
 He ordeyned hym a quest of his men so stronge .
 The Iustice and the schereue bothe hangid hye .
 To weyuen with the ropis *and* with the wynde drye . 880
 And the .xij. sisours sorw haue that rekke .
 Alle thei were hangid fast bi the nekke .
 ¶ Thus endid the fals knyght with his trechery .
 That euyr' had lad his lif in falsnes *and* foly . 884

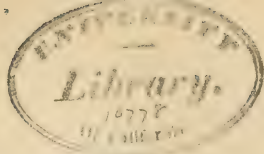
He was hanged bi the nekke *and* not bi the purs.
 That was the mede that he had for his fadirs curs.
 Sir' Otes was eldist *and* Gamelyn was yong.
 Wenten to here frendis *and* passedyn to the kyng. 888
 Thei maden pees with the kyng of the best sise.
 The kyng' loued weft sir' Ote *and* made hym Iustice.
 And after' the kyng made Gamelyn in Este *and* in west.
 Chief Iustice of his fre forest. 892
 Alle his wight yong men the kyng for-yaf here gilt.
 And sithen in good office the kyng hath alle hem pilt.
 ¶ Thus wan Gamelyn his londe *and* his lede.
 And wreke hym on hys enemyes *and* quyt hem here mede.
 And sir' Ote his brother' made hym his heier'./ 897
 And sithen weddid Gamelyn a wif good *and* feier'.
 Thei lyueden to-gider / while that crist wolde.
 And sithen was Gamelyn grauen vndir' molde. 900
 And so schaff we alle may ther' no man fle.
 God bryng vs to the ioy that euyr' schaff be.
here endith the Cokis tale./



[NOTICE—Inasmuch as, after the *Cook's Tale*, the order of the Tales in the *Hengwrt MS* differs from the right order of the Tales in which the *Six-Text* is to be arranged, the further issue of the separate Hengwrt Parts is suspended till all the Tales before the *Shipman's* in the Hengwrt MS have been issued in the *Six-Text*. Then the proper pagings of the separate Hengwrt sheets can be ascertained, and a large Part will be issued, bringing the separate issue abreast of the *Six-Text*. See the following scheme :—

<i>Six-Text</i>	<i>Hengwrt MS.</i>
rest of Group B { <i>SHIPMAN</i> <i>Prioress</i> <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i> <i>Monk</i> <i>Nun's Priest</i>	Group D { <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i>
Group C { <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardoner</i>	end of Group B { <i>Monk</i> <i>Nun's Priest</i>
Group D { <i>Wife of Bath</i> <i>Friar</i> <i>Summoner</i>	Group H <i>Manciple</i>
Group E { <i>Clerk</i> <i>Merchant</i>	first of B <i>Man of Law</i>
Group F { <i>Squire</i> <i>Franklin</i>	Group F 1 <i>Squire</i>
Group G { <i>Second Nun</i> <i>Canon's Yeoman</i>	Group E 2 <i>Merchant</i>
Group H <i>Manciple</i>	Group F 2 <i>Franklin</i>
Group I <i>Parson</i>	Group G 1 <i>Second Nun</i> (<i>Canon's Yeoman</i> is not in the MS)
	Group E 1 <i>Clerk</i>
	Group C { <i>Doctor</i> <i>Pardoner</i>
	middle of Group B { <i>SHIPMAN</i> <i>Prioress</i> <i>Thopas</i> <i>Melibeus</i>
	Group I <i>Parson</i>]

1 January, 1871.



GROUP D. FRAGMENT V.

§ 1. WIFE OF BATH'S PREAMBLE.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ Here bigynneth the prologe of the tale of [leaf 58]
the Wyf of Bathe.

Experience / thogh noon Auctoritee
Were in this world / is right ynogh for me
To speke of wo / that is in mariage
ffor lordynges / sith þat I twelf yeer was of age 4
Thonked be god / that is eterne on lyue.
Housbondes atte chirche dore / I haue had fyue
If I so ofte / myghte han wedded be
And alle were worthy men / in hir degree 8
But me was told certeyn / noght longe agon is
That sith þat Crist ne wente neuere but onys
To weddyng in the Cane of Galilee
That by the same ensample / taughte he me 12
That I ne sholde / wedded be but ones
¶ Herke eek / lo / which a sharp word for the nones
Bisyde a welle / Ihesus / god and man
Spak / in repreue of the Samaritan 16
¶ Thow hast yhad / fyue housbondes quod he
And that ilke man / which that now hath thee
Is nat thyn housbonde / thus he seyde certeyn.
What that he mente ther-by / I kan nat seyn 20
But þat I axe / why þat the fifthe man
Was noon housbonde / to the Samaritan
How manye / myghte she han in mariage
Yet herde I neuere / tellen in myn age 24

Vp-on this nombre / diffynycioun
 Men may dyuyne / and glosen vp & doun
 But wel I woot expres / with-uten lye
 God bad vs / for to wexe and multiplie 28
 That gentil text^t kan I wel vnderstonde
 ¶ Eek wel I woot^t he seyde þat myn housbonde
 Sholde lete / fader and moder / and take to me
 But of no nombre / mencion^o made he 32
 Of Bigamye / or of Octogamye
 Why sholde men thanne / speke of it vileynye
 ¶ Lo here / the wise kyng^t Dann Salomon
 I trowe / he hadde wyues many oon 36
 As wolde god / it leueful were to me [leaf 58, back]
 To be refreshed / half so ofte as he
 Which yifte of god hadde he / for alle hise wyuys
 No man hath swich / that in this world alyue is 40
 God woot^t this noble kyng^t as to my wit
 The firste nyght^t hadde many a murye fit
 With ech of hem / so wel was hym on lyue
 Blessed be god / that I haue wedded fyue 44
 Wel come the sixte / whan þat euere he shal
 ffor sith I wol nat kepe me / chaast in al
 Whan myn housbonde / is fro the world agon
 Som cristen man / shal wedde me anon 48
 ffor thanne thapostle seith / þat I am free
 To wedde a goddes half / where it liketh me
 He seith / that to be wedded is no synne
 Bet is to be wedded / than to brynne 52
 What rekketh me / theigh folk / seye vileynye
 Of shrewed Lameth / and his bigamye
 I woot wel / Abraham was an holy man
 And Iacob eek^t as fer as euere I kan 56
 And ech of hem / hadde wyues mo than two
 And many another / holy man also
 ¶ Where kan ye seye / in any maner age
 That heighe god / defended mariage 60

By expres word / I pray yow telleth me
 Or where comanded he virgynytee
 I woot as wel as ye / it is no drede
 Thapostle / whan he speketh of maydenhede 64
 He seyde / that *precept* ther-of / hadde he noon
 Men may conseille a womman / to be oon
 But conseillyng^t nys no comandement^t
 He put it^t in oure owene Iuggement^t 68
 ffor hadde god / comanded maydenhede
 Thanne hadde he dampned weddyng^t *with* the dede
 And certes / if ther were no seed ysowe
 Virgynytee thanne / wher-of sholde it growe 72
 Poul dorste nat comanden / at the leeste
 A thyng^t of which / his mayster yaf noon heeste
 The dart/ is set vp for virgynytee
 Cacche who so may / who renneth best lat se 76
 But this word / is noght take of euery wight^t [leaf 59]
 But ther as god / list yeue it of his myght^t
 I woot wel / that thapostle was a mayde
 But nathelees / thogh *pat* he wroot^t or sayde 80
 He wolde / that euery wight^t were swich as he
 Al nys but conseil / to virgynytee
 And for to been a wyf / he yaf me leue
 Of Indulgence / so nys it no repreue 84
 To wedde me / if that my make dye
 With-uten excepcion of bigamye
 Al were it good / no womman for to touche
 He mente / as in his bed / or in his couche 88
 ffor *peril* is / bothe fyr and tow tassemble
 Ye knowe / what this ensample may resemble
 This al and som / he heeld virgynytee
 Moore *parfit*^t than weddyng in freletee 92
 ffreletee clepe I / but if *pat* he and she
 Wolde leden / al hir lyf^t in chastitee
 I graunte it wel / I haue noon enuye
 Thogh maydenhede / *preferre* bigamye 96

It liketh hem to be clene / in body and goost
 Of myn estat^t ne wol I make no boost^t
 for wel ye knowe / a lord in his houshold
 Ne hath nat euery vessel / al of gold 100
 Somme been of tree / and doon hir lord *seruyse*
 God elepeth folk to hym / in sondry wyse
 And euerich / hath of god a *propre* yifte
 Som this / som that^t as hym liketh shifte 104
 Virgynytee / is greet *perfeccioñ*
 And continence eek^t with deuocioñ
 But Crist^t that of *perfeccioñ* / is welle
 Bad nat euery wight^t he sholde go selle 108
 Al that he hadde / and yeue it to the poore
 And in swich wise / folwe hym and his foore
 He spak to hem / that wol lyue *parfitly*
 And lordynges / by youre leue / that am nat I 112
 I wol bistowe / the flour of al myn age
 In thactes / and in fruyt of mariage
 ¶ Telle me also / to what conclusioñ questio^t
 Were membres maad / of generacioñ 116
 And of so *parfit* wys a wight ywrought / [leaf 59, back]
 Trusteth right wel / they were nat maad for noght^t
 Glose who so wole / and seye bothe vp and down
 That they were maad / for purgacioun 120
 Of Vryne / and oure bothe thynges smale
 Was eek to knowe / a femelle / from a male
 And for noon oother cause / sey ye / no?
 Thexperience / woot wel it is noght so 124
 So that the Clerkes / be nat with me wrothe
 I sey this / þat they maked been for bothe
 That is to seyn / for office and for ese
 Of engendrure / ther we nat god displese 128
 Why sholde men ellis / in hir bokes sette
 That man shal yelde / to his wyf hir dette
 Now wherwith / sholde he make his paiement
 If he ne vsed / his sely Instrument^t 132

Thanne were they maad / vp-on a creature
 To purge vryne / and eek for engendrure
 ¶ But I seye noght^t þat euery wight is holde
 That hath swich harneys / as I to yow tolde 136
 To goon / and vsen hem in engendrure
 Thanne sholde men take / of Chastitee no cure
 Crist was a mayde / and shapen as a man
 And many a Seynt^t sith that the world bigan 140
 yet lyued they euere / in parfit Chastitee
 I nyl envie / no virgynytee
 Lat hem be breed / of pured whete seed
 And lat us wyues / hote Barlybreed 144
 And yet *with* Barlybreed / Mark telle kan
 Oure lord Ihesu / refresshed many a man
 In swich estat^t as god hath clepyd vs
 I wol perseuere / I nam nat *precius* 148
 In wifhode / wol I vse myn Instrument^t
 As frely / as my makere hath it sent^t
 If I be daungerous / god yeue me sorwe
 Myn housbonde / shal it han / bothe cue and morwe 152
 Whan that hym list^t com forth and paye his dette
 And housbonde / wol I haue / I wol nat lette
 Which shal be / bothe / my dettour and my thral
 And haue / his tribulacion / with-al 156
 Vp-on his flessch / whil that I am his wyf [leaf 60]
 I haue the power / duryng al my lyf
 Vp-on his *propre* body / and nat he
 Right thus / thapostle / tolde it vn-to me 160
 And bad oure housbondes / for to loue vs wel
 Al this sentence / me liketh euery del
Vp stirte the Pardoner / and that anon
 Now dame quod he / by god and by Seint Iohn 164
 Ye been a noble Prechour / in this cas
 I was aboute / to wedde a wyf allas
 What^t sholde I bye it / on my flessch so deere
 Yet hadde I leuere / wedde no wyf to yeere 168

¶ Abyd quod she / my tale is nat bigonne
 Nay / thow shalt drynken / of another tonne
 Er þat I go / shal sauoure wors than Ale
 And whan that I / haue toold thee forth my tale 172
 Of tribulacion / in maryage
 Of which I am expert in al myn age
 This is to seye / my self hath been the whippe
 Thanne maystow / chese / wheither þat thow wolt sippe
 Of thilke tonne / that I shal abroche 177
 Be war of it / er thow to neigh approche
 ffor I shal telle ensamples / mo than ten
 Who so þat nyle / be war / by othere men 180
 By hym / shal othere men corrected be
 Thise same wordes / writeth Protholome
 Rede in his Almageste / and take it there
 ¶ Dame I wolde pray yow / if youre wyl it were 184
 Seyde this Pardoner / as ye bigan
 Telle forth youre tale / spareth for no man
 And techeth vs yonge men / of youre praktyke
 ¶ Gladly quod she / syn it may yow lyke 188
 But that I praye / to al this compaignye
 If that I speke / after my fantasye
 As taketh nat agrief / of that I seye
 ffor myn entente / nys but for to pleye 192
Now sire / thanne wol I telle yow forth my tale
 As euere / moot I drynke / wyn or Ale
 I shal seye sooth / tho housbondes þat I hadde
 As three of hem were goode / and two were badde 196
 The thre men / were goode / and ryche / and olde [leaf 60, back]
 Vnnethe myghte they / the Statut holde
 In which / that they were bounden vn-to me
 Ye woot wel / what I mene of this pardee 200
 As help me god / I laughe whan I thynke
 How pitously / a nyght I made hem swynke
 And by my fey / I tolde of it no stoor
 They hadde me yeuen / hir land and hir tresoor 204

Me neded nat' do lenger diligence
 To wynne hir loue / or doon hem reuerence
 They loued me so wel / by god aboue
 That I ne tolde / no deyntee of hir loue 208
 A wys womman / wol bisye hire / euere in oon
 To gete hir loue / ye ther as she hath noon
 But sith I hadde hem / hoolly in myn hond
 And sith that they / hadde yeuen me al hir lond 212
 What sholde I take kepe / hem for to plesse
 But it were / for my profit' and myn ese
 I sette hem awerk' by my fey
 That many a nyght' they songen weylawey 216
 The bacon / was nat fet for hem I trowe
 That som men han / in Essex at Donmowe
 I gouerned hem / so wel after my lawe
 That ech of hem / ful blisful was and fawe 220
 To brynge me / gaye thynges fro the ffeyre
 They were ful glad / whan I spak to hem feyre
 ffor god it woot' I chidde hem spitously
 ¶ Now herkneth / how I bar me proprely 224
 ye wise wyues / that konne vnderstonde
 Thus sholde ye speke / and bere hem wrong on honde
 ffor half so boldely / kan ther no man
 Swere and lye / as a womman kan 228
 I sey nat this / by wyues þat ben wyse
 But if it be / whan they hem mysauyse
 A wys wyf / if that she kan hir good
 Shal bere hym an hond / the Cow is wood 232
 And take witnesse / of hir owene mayde
 Of hire assent' but herkneth how I sayde
 ¶ Sire olde kaynard / is this thyn array
 Why is / my Neghebores wyf so gay 236
 She is honoured / ouer al ther she goth [leaf 61]
 I sitte at hoom / I haue no thrifty cloth
 What dostow / at my neghebores hous
 Is she so fair / artow so amorous 240

What rowne ye with oure mayde / benedicite
 Sire olde lechour / lat thy Iapes be
 And if I haue / a gossib / or A freend
 With-uten gilt ye chiden as a feend 244
 If that I walke / or pleye vn-to his hous
 Thow comest hoom / as dronken as a mous
 And prechest on thy bench / with yuel preef
 Thow seyst to me / it is a greet mescheef 248
 To wedde a poure womman / for costage
 And if that she be ryche / of heigh parage
 Thanne seistow / that it is a tormentrye
 To suffire / hir pryde / and hir malencolye 252
 And if þat she be fair / thow verray knaue
 Thow seist that euery holour wol hire haue
 She may no while / in chastitee abyde
 That is assayled / vp-on ech a syde 256
 ¶ Thow seyst som folk / desiren vs for richesse
 Somme for oure shape / and somme for oure fairnesse
 And somme / for she kan outhur synge / or daunce
 And somme / for gentillesse / and dalyaunce 260
 Somme for hir handes / and hir armes smale
 Thus goth al to the deuel / by thy tale
 Thow seyst / men may nat kepe a Castel wal
 It may so longe / assaylled been ouer al 264
 And if that she be foul / thow seyst þat she
 Coueiteth euery man / that she may se
 ffor as a Spaynel / she wol on hym lepe
 Til that she fynde / som man hir to chepe 268
 Ne noon so grey goos / goth ther in the lake
 As seistow / wol be with-oute make
 And seyst it is an hard thyng / for to wolde
 A thyng / that no man wol his thankes holde 272
 Thus seistow lorel / whan thow goost to bedde
 And that no wys man / nedeth for to wedde
 Ne no man / that entendeth vn-to leuene
 With wilde thonder dynt and firy leuene 276

Moote thy welked nekke / be to-broke [leaf 61, back]
 Thow seyst^t that droppynge houses / and eek smoke
 And chidyng wyues / maken men to flee
 Out of hir owene houses / a benedicitee: 280
 What eyleth / swich an old man for to chide
 Thow seyst^t we wyues / wil oure vices hyde
 Til we be fast / and thanne we wol hem shewe
 Wel may that be / a prouerbe of a shrewe 284
 Thow seist^t þat Oxen / Asses / hors / and houndes
 They been assayed / at dyuerse stoundes
 Bacynes / laouours / er that men hem bye
 Spoones / stooles / and al swich housbondrye 288
 And so be pottes / clothes / and array
 But folk / of wyues / maken noon assay
 Til they be wedded / olde dotard shrewe
 And thanne seistow / we wil oure vices shewe 292
 Thow seist also / that it displeth me
 But if that thou / wolt preise my beautee
 And but thou powre / alwey vp-on my face
 And clepe me faire dame / in euery place 296
 And but thou make a feeste / on thilke day
 That I was born / and make me fressh and gay
 And but thou do / to my norice honour
 And to my chambrere / with-Inne my bour 300
 And to my fadres folk / and his allyes
 Thus seistow / olde baryl ful of lyes
 And yet^t of oure Apprentice / Iankyn
 ffor his crispe heer / shynyng^t as gold so fyn 304
 And for he squyereth me / bothe vp and down
 Yet hastow caught^t fals suspecioun
 I wil hym nat^t thogh thou were deed to morwe
 ¶ But tel me this / why hidestow with sorwe 308
 The keyes of thy Chestre / away fro me
 It is my good / as wel as thyn pardee
 What wenestow / make an ydiote of oure dame
 Now by that lord / that called is Seint Iame 312

Thow shalt noght bothe / thogh þat thow were wood
 Be maister / of my body / and my good
 That oon thow shalt forgo / maugree thyne eyen
 What helpeth it^t of me enquire and spyen 316
 I trowe / thow woldest^t lok me in thy chiste [leaf 62]
 Thow sholdest seye / wyf/ go wher thee liste
 Taak youre disport^t I nyl leue no talis
 I knowe yow / for a trewe wyf/ Dame Alis 320
 We loue no man / that taketh kepe / or charge
 Wher þat we goon / we wol been at oure large
 Of alle men / yblessed moote he be
 The wise Astrologen / Daun Protholome 324
 That seith this prouerbe / in his Almageste
 Of alle men / his wisdom is hyste
 That rekketh nat^t who hath the world in hond
 By this prouerbe / thow shalt vnderstonde 328
 Haue thow ynogh / what thar thee rekke / or care
 How myrily / that othere folkes fare
 ffor certes / olde dotard / by youre leue
 Ye shal han queynte / right ynogh at eue 332
 He is to greet a nygard / that wil werne
 A man to lighte a candle / at his lanterne
 He shal han / neuer the lasse light pardee
 Haue thow ynogh / thee thar nat pleyne thee 336
 ¶ Thow seist also / that if we make vs gay
 With clothyng^t and with precious array
 That it is peril / of oure chastitee
 And yet with sorwe / thow most enforce thee 340
 And seye thise wordes / in thapostles name
 In habit^t maad with chastitee and shame
 Ye wommen / shal apparaille yow quod he
 And nat in tressed heer / and gay perree 344
 As perllys / ne with gold / ne clothes ryche
 After thy text^t ne after thy rubryche
 I wol nat werke / as mucche / as is a gnat^t
 Thow seydest this / þat I was lyk a Cat^t 348

ffor who so wolde senge / a Cattes skyn
 Thanne wolde the Cat wel dwellen in his In
 And if the Cattes skyn / be slyk and gay
 She wol nat dwelle in house / half a day 352
 But forth she wole / er any day be dawed
 To shewe hir skyn / and goon a Caterwawed
 This is to seye / if I be gay sire shrewe
 I wol renne out my borel for to shewe 356
 Sire olde fool / what helpeth thee tespyen [leaf 62, back]
 Thogh thou preyre Argus / with his hundred eyen
 To be my wardecorps / as he kan best
 In feith / he shal nat kepe me / but me lest 360
 Yet koude I make his berd / as mote I thee
 ¶ Thow seydest eek þat ther ben thynges three
 The whiche thynges / troublen al this erthe
 And that no wight may endure the ferthe 364
 O leue sire shrewe / Ihesu shorte thy lyf
 Yet prechestow / and seist an hateful wyf
 Yrekened is / for oon of thise myschaunces
 Been ther / noone othere ressemblaunces 368
 That ye may likne / youre parables to
 But if a sely wyf be oon of tho
 ¶ Thow liknest eek / wommanes loue to helle
 To bareyne lond / ther water may nat dwelle 372
 Thow liknest it also / to wilde fyr
 The moore it brenneth / the moore it hath desyr
 To consumen euery thyng þat brent wol be
 Thow seist right as wormes shende a tree 376
 Right so a wyf / destroyeth hir housbonde
 This knowen they / that been to wyues bonde
 ¶ Lordynges / right thus / as ye han vnderstonde
 Bar I stifly / myne olde housbondes on honde 380
 That thus they seyden / in hir dronkenesse
 And al was fals / but that I took wisesse
 On Iankyn / and on my Nece also
 O lord / the pyne I dide hem / and the wo 384

fful giltlees / by goddes swete pyne
 ffor as an hors / I koude byte and whyne
 I koude pleyne / and I was in the gilt
 Or ellis / often tyme / I hadde been spilt' 388
 Who so that first to Mille comth / first gryn't
 I pleyned first' so was oure werre stynt'
 They were ful glad / to excusen hem ful blyue
 Of thyng' of which they neuere agilte hir lyue 392
 Of wenches / wolde I bern hem on honde
 Whan that for syk' they myghte vnnethe stonde
 Yet tikled I his herte / for that he
 Wende that I hadde had of hym / so greet chiertee 396
 I swoor / that my walkyng' out by nyghte [leaf 63]
 Was for to espye / wenches that he dighte
 Vnder that colour / hadde I many a myrthe
 ffor al swich wit' is yeuen vs in oure birthe 400
 Deceite / wepyng' spynnyng' god hath yeue
 To wommen kyndely / whil they may lyue
 And thus / of o thyng' I auante me
 At ende / I hadde the bet in ech degree 404
 By sleighte / or force / or by som maner thyng'
 As by continuel murmur / or grucchyng'
 Namely abedde / hadden they meschaunce
 Ther wolde I chide / and do hem no plesaunce 408
 I wolde no lenger / in the bed abyde
 If that I felte his arm / ouer my syde
 Til he hadde maad / his raunceon vn-to me
 Thanne wolde I suffre hym / do his nycetee 412
 And ther-fore / euery man / this tale I telle
 Wynne who so may / for al is for to selle
 With empty hond / men may none haukes lure
 ffor wynnyng' wolde I al his lust endure 416
 And make me / a feyned appetit'
 And yet in bacoñ / hadde I neuere delit
 That made me / that euere I wolde hem chyde
 For thogh the Pope / hadde seten hem bisyde 420

I wolde noght spare hem / at hir owene bord
 ffor by my trouthe / I quytte hem / word for word
 As help me / verray god omnipotent
 Togh I right now / sholde make my testament 424
 I ne owe hem nat a word / that it nys quyt
 I broghte it so aboute / by my wit
 That they moste yeue it vp / as for the beste
 Or ellis / hadde we neuere been in reste 428
 ffor thogh he looked / as a wood leon
 yet sholde he faille / of his conclusiō
 ¶ Thanne wolde I seye / good lief taak keepe
 How mekely / looketh Wilkyn oure scheepe 432
 Com neer my spouse / lat me ba thy cheke
 Ye sholden be / al pacient/ and meke
 And han / a swete spyced conscience
 Sith ye so preche / of Iobes pacience 436
 Suffreth alwey / syn ye so wel kan preche [leaf 63, back]
 And but ye do / certeyn we shal yow teche
 That it is fair / to han a wyf in pees
 Oon of vs two / moste bowen doutelees 440
 And sith a man / is moore resonable
 Than womman is / ye mosten been suffrable
 What eyleth yow / to grucche thus and grone
 Is it for ye wolde haue / my queynte allone 444
 Wy taak it al / lo haue it euery del
 Peter I shrewe yow / but ye loue it wel
 ffor if I wolde selle / my bele chose
 I koude walke / as fressh as is a rose 448
 But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth
 Ye be to blame / by god I sey yow sooth
 Swiche manere wordes / hadde we on honde
 Now wol I speke / of my ferthe housbonde 452
My ferthe housbonde / was a reuelour
 This is to seyn he hadde a paramour
 And I was yong and ful of ragerye
 Stibourne and strong and ioly as a pye 456

How koude I daunce / to an harpe smale
 And synge ywys / as any nyghtyngale
 Whan I hadde dronke / a draghte of swete wyn
 Metellyus / the foule cherl the swyn 460
 That with a staf / birafte his wyf hir lyf
 ffor she drank' wyn /. though I hadde been his wyf
 Ne sholde nat' han daunted me fro drynke
 And after wyn / on Venus moste I thynke 464
 ffor also siker / as coold engendreth hayl
 A likerous mouth / moste han a likerous tayl
 In womman vynolent / is no defence
 This knowen lechours / by experience 468
 But lord crist' whan þat it remembreth me
 Vp-on my youthe / and on my iolytee
 It tikeleth me / aboute myn herte roote
 Vn-to this day / it dooth myn herte boote 472
 That I haue had my world / as in my tyme
 But age allas / that al wole enuenyme
 Hath me biraft' my beautee / and my pith
 Lat go farwel / the deucl go ther-with 476
 The flour is goon / ther is namoore to telle [leaf 64]
 The bren as I best kan / now moste I sellē
 But yet' to be right murye / wol I fonde
 Now wol I tellen / of my ferthe housbonde 480
 ¶ I seye I hadde in herte gret despit
 That he / of any oother had delit
 But he was quyt' by god and by Seint Iocē
 I made hym / of the same wode a troce 484
 Nat of my body / in no foul manere
 But certeynly / I made folk swich chiere
 That in his owene grece / I made hym frye
 ffor angre / and for verray Ialousye 488
 By god / in erthe / I was his purgatorie
 ffor which I hope / his soule be in glorie
 ffor god it woot' he sat ful ofte and soong'
 Whan þat his shoo / ful bitterly hym wroong' 492

Ther was no wight/ sauc god and he / þat wiste
 In many wise / how soore I hym twiste
 He deyde / whan I cam fro Ierusalem
 And lyth ygraue / vnder the roode beam 496
 Al is his tounbe / noght so curys
 As was the sepulcre / of hym Daryus
 Which that Appellus / wroghte subtilly
 It nys but wast^t to burye hym preciously 500
 Lat hym fare wel / god gyue his soule reste
 He is now / in his graue / and in his cheste
Now / of my fifthe housbonde / wol I telle
 God lat his soule / neuere come in helle 504
 And yet was he to me / the mooste shrewe
 That feele I / on my rybbes al by rewe
 And euere shal / vn-to myn endyng day
 But in oure bed / he was so fressh and gay 508
 And ther with al / so wel koude he me glose
 Whan that he wolde / han my bele chose
 That thogh he hadde me bet^t on euery bon
 He koude wynne agayn / my loue anon 512
 I trowe I loued hym best^t for that he
 Was of his loue / daungerous to me
 We wommen han / if that I shal nat lye
 In this matere / a queynte fantasye 516
 Wayte what thyng^t we may nat lightly haue [leaf 64, back]
 Ther after / wol we crye al day / and craue
 fforbede vs thyng^t and that desiren we
 Preesse on vs faste / and thanne wol we fle 520
 With daunger / oute we / al oure chaffare
 Greet prees at Market / maketh deere ware
 And to greet cheepe / is holden at litel prys
 This knoweth euery womman / that is wys 524
¶ My fifthe housbonde / god his soule blesse
 Which þat I took for loue / and no rychesse
 He som tyme / was a clerk of Oxenford
 And hadde laft scole / and wente at hom to bord 528

With my gossyb / dwellyng in oure town
 God haue hir soule / hir name was Alisoun
 She knew myn herte / and eek my pryuetee
 Bet than oure parysshe preest^t as mote I thee 532
 To hire biwreyed I / my conseil al
 ffor hadde myn housbonde / pissed on a wal
 Or doon a thyng^t / that sholde haue cost his lyf
 To hire / and to another worthy wyf 536
 And to my Nece / which þat I loued wel
 I wolde han toold / his conseil euery del
 And so I dide / ful often / god it woot^t
 That made his face / often reed and hoot 540
 ffor verray shame / and blamed hym self^t for he
 Hadde toold to me / so greet a pryuetee
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones in a lente
 So often tymes / I to my gossyb wente 544
 ffor euere yet^t I louede to be gay
 And for to walke / in March / Auerylle / and May
 ffrom hous to hous / to here sondry tales
 That Iankyn Clerk / and my gossyb dame Alys 548
 And I my self / in to the feeldes wente
 Myn housbonde was at london / al that lente
 I hadde / the bettre leyser for to pleye
 And for to se / and eek for to be seye 552
 Of lusty folk^t what wiste I wher my grace
 Was shapen for to be / or in what place
 Ther-fore / I made my visitacions
 To Vigilies / and to processions 556
 To prechyng^t eek / and to thise pilgrimages [leaf 65]
 To pleyes of myracles / and to mariages
 And wered vp on / my gaye scarlet gytes
 Thise wormes / ne thise moththes / ne thise Mytes 560
 Vp-on my peril / frete hem neuer a del
 And wostow / why / for they were vsed wel
 ¶ Now wol I tellen forth / what happed me
 I seye / that in the feeldes walked we 564

Til trewely / we hadde swich daliaunce
 This clerk/ and I / that of my purueiaunce
 I spak to hym / and seyde hym / how that he
 If I were wydewe / sholde wedde me 568
 ffor certeynly / I seye for no bobazunce
 Yet was I neuere / with-uten purueiaunce
 Of mariage / nof othere thynges eek /
 I holde a mouses herte / noght worth a loek' 572
 That hath but oon hole / for to sterte to
 And if that faille / thanne is al y-do
 [I bar him on honde / he had enchaunted me [Camb. Univ. MS
 Dd. 4. 24,
 leaf 73, back, line 21]
 My Dame taught me / that sotilte
 And eke I seide / I mette of him al nyght
 He wold han slayn me / as I lay vp right
 And al my bed / was ful of verray blod
 But 3et I hope / that 3e shuln do me good
 ffor blod bytokeneth gold / as me was taught
 And al was fals / I dremed of it right nought
 But as I folwed ay / my dames loore
 As wel of that / as of othere thynges more.] [Camb. Dd. 4. 24
 extract stops]
 But now sire / lat me se / what shal I seyn
 A .ha. by god / I haue my tale ageyn
 ¶ Whan that my fourthe housbonde / was a beere
 I weep algate / and made sory cheere 588
 As wyues mooten / for it is vsage
 And with my couerchief / couered my visage
 But for that I was / purueyed of a make
 I wepte but smal / and that I vndertake 592
 ¶ To chirche was myn housbonde / born a morwe
 With neghebores / that for hym maden sorwe
 And Iankynoure clerk / was oon of tho
 As help me god / whan that I saw hym go 596
 After the beere / me thoughte he hadde a payre
 Of legges and of feet' so clene and fayre
 That al myn herte / I gaf vn-to his hoold
 He was I trowe / twenty wynter oold 600

And I was fourty / if I shal seye sooth
 But yit I hadde alwey / a coltes tooth
 Gat tothed I was / & that bicam me weel
 I hadde the preente / of Seynt Venus seel 604
 As help me god I was a lusty oon
 And fayr/ and ryche / and yong^t and wel bigoon
 And trewely / as myne housbondes tolde me [leaf 65, back]
 I hadde the beste quonyam / myghte be 608
 [flor certes I am / al Venerien [Cambr. Univ. MS Dd. 4.24, lf 74, line 5]
 [Not in Addit. 5140,
 lf 96, bk; or Harl.
 7335, lf 69; or Sloane
 1685, lf 111; MS Reg.
 18 C ii, lf 112, bk;
 Sloane 1686, lf 128;
 or Cambr. Mm. 2. 5.]
 In feelyng / and myn hert is Marcien
 Venus me 3af my lust / my likerousnesse
 And Mars 3af me / my sturdy hardynesse]
 Myn ascendent^t was Taur / and Mars ther-Inne
 Allas / allas / that euere loue was synne
 I folwed ay / myn Inclinacioñ
 By vertu / of my constellacioñ 616
 That made me / I koude noght withdrawe
 My chambre of Venus / from a good felawe
 [3et haue I Mars merk / vp-on my face [Cambr. Univ. MS Dd. 4.24,
 leaf 74, line 19]
 And also / in a nother pryue place
 flfor god so wysely / be my sauacioun [Not in Addit. 5140, lf 96, bk;
 or Harl. 7335, lf 69; or
 Sloane 1685, lf 111; MS Reg.
 18 C ii, lf 112, bk; Sloane
 1686, lf 128; or Cambr. Mm.
 2. 5.]
 I louede neuere / by no discrecioun
 But euere folwed / myn appetit^t
 Al were he short / long blak or whizt 624
 I toke no kepe / so that he liked me
 How poore he was / ne cke of what degree] [MS Dd. 4. 24 ex-
 tract stops]
 ¶ What sholde I seye / but at the Monthes ende
 This ioly clerk / Iankyn þat was so hende 628
 Hath wedded me / with greet solempnytee
 And to hym yaf I / al the lond and fee
 That euere was me yeuen / ther bifore
 But afterward / repented me ful sore 632
 He nolde suffre / no thyng of my list^t
 By god / he smoot me ones / on the lyst^t
 flfor that I rente / out of his book a leef
 That of the strook/ myn ere weex al deef 636

Stibourne I was / as is a leonesse
 And of my tonge / a verray Iangleresse
 And walke I wolde / as I hadde doon biforn
 ffrom hous to hous / al-though he hadde it sworn 640
 ffor which / he often tymes / wolde preche
 And me / of olde Romayn gestes teche
 How he Symplicius Gallus / lafte his wif
 And hire forsook^t for terme of al his lif^t 644
 Noght^t but for open heueded he hir say
 Lokynge out at his dore / vp-on a day
 ¶ Another Romayn / tolde he me by name
 That for his wyf / was at a Someres game 648
 With-uten his wityng^t / he forsook hire eke
 And thanne wolde he / vp-on his Bible seke
 That ilke *prouerbe* / of Ecclesiaste
 Where he comandeth / and forbedeth faste 652
 Man shal nat suffre his wyf / go roule aboute
 Thanne wold he seye right thus / with-uten doute
 Who so þat buyldeth his hous / al of salwes
 And priketh his blynde hors / ouer the falwes
 And suffreth his wyf / to go seken halwes
 Is worthy / to ben hanged on the galwes } nota 656
 But al for noght^t I sette noght an hawe [leaf 66]
 Of his *prouerbe* / nof his olde sawe 660
 Ny wolde nat^t of hym corrected be
 I hate hym / þat my vices telleth me
 And so doon mo / god woot of vs than I
 This made hym / with me wood al outrelly 664
 I nolde noght forbere hym / in no cas
 ¶ Now wol I sey yow sooth / by Seint Thomas
 Why þat I rente / out of his book a leef
 ffor which / he smoot me so / þat I was deef 668
 He hadde a book / þat gladly nyght and day
 ffor his disport^t he wolde rede alway
 He clepyd it^t Valerie and Theofraste
 At which book / he logh alwey ful faste 672

And eek ther was / som tyme a clerk at Rome
 A Cardynal / that highte Seint Ierome
 That made a book^t agayn Iovinian
 In which book^t eek ther was Tertulan 676
 Crisippus / Trotula / and Helowys
 That was Abbess / nat fer fro Parys
 And eek the parables / of Salomon
 Ouydes art^t and bokes many on 680
 And alle thise were bounden / in o volume
 And euery nyght and day / was his custume
 Whan he hadde leyser / and vacacioñ
 ffrom oother / worldly ocupacioñ 684
 To reden in this book^t of wikked wyues
 He knew of hem / mo legendes and lyues
 Than been of goode wyues in the Bible
 ffor trusteth wel / it is an impossible 688
 That any clerk^t wol speke good of wyues
 But if it be / of holy seintes lyues
 Nof noon oother womman / neuer the mo
 Who peynted the leon / tel me who 692
 By god / if wommen / hadden writen stories
 As clerkes han / with-Inne hir oratories
 They wolde han writen of men / moore wikkednesse
 Than al the mark of Adam may redresse 696
 The children / of Mercurie and Venus
 Been in hir wirkyng / ful contrarius
 Mercurie loueth / wysdam and science [leaf 66, back]
 And Venus loueth / Riot and dispence 700
 And for hir diuerse / disposicioñ
 Ech faileth / in ootheres exaltacioñ
 And thus god woot^t Mercurie is desolat
 In pisces / wher venus is exaltat^t 704
 And venus faileth / ther Mercurie is reysed
 Ther-fore no womman / of no clerk is preysed
 The clerk^t whan he is old / and may noht do
 Of venus werkes / worth his olde sho 708

Thanne sit he doun / and writ in his dotage
 That wommen / kan nat kepe hir mariage
 ¶ But now to purpos / why I tolde thee
 That I was beten / for a book pardee 712
 Vp-on a nyght I ankyn þat was oure sire
 Redde on his book / as he sat by the fire
 Of Eua first / þat for hir wikkednesse
 Was al mankynde / broght to wrecchednesse 716
 [ffor which that ihesu crist / him self was slayn [Camb. Univ. MS Dd. 4. 24, f 75, l. 26]
 That bought vs / with his hert blod a-gayn [Not in Mm. 2. 5; not in Hart. 7335, f 70, bk; Harl. 1758, f 96; Ad. 5140, f 98; Sloane 1685, f 112, bk; Sloane 1686, f 129, bk.]
 Loo heere expres of wommen / may 3e fynde
 That womman was the losse / of al mankynde]
 ¶ Tho redde he me / how Sampson loste his herys
 Slepynge / his lemman kitte it with hir sherys
 Thurgh which treson / loste he bothe hise eyen
 ¶ Tho redde he me / if that I shal nat lyen 724
 Of hercules / and of his Dianyre
 That caused hym / to sette hym self a fyre
 ¶ No thyng forgot he / the sorwe and wo
 That Socrates / hadde with his wyues two 728
 How Xantippa / caste pisse vp-on his heed
 This sely man sat stille / as he were deed
 He wipte his heed / namoore dorste he seyn
 But er that thonder stynte / comth a reyn 732
 ¶ Of Phasifpha / that was the queene of Crete
 ffor shrewednesse / hym thoughte the tale swete
 ffy spek namoore / it is a grisly thyng
 Of hire horrible lust and hir likyng 736
 ¶ Of Clitermystra / for hir lecherye
 That falsly / made hir housbonde for to dye
 He redde it with ful good deuocioun
 ¶ He tolde me eek for what occasioun 740
 Amphiorax / at Thebes loste his lyf
 Myn housbonde / hadde a legende of his wyf
 ¶ Exiphilem / that for an Ouche of gold [leaf 67]
 Hath priuely / vn-to the grekys told 744

Wher þat hir housbonde / hidde hym in a place
 ffor which / he hadde at Thebes sory grace
 ¶ Of lyma tolde he me / and of lucie
 They bothe / made hir housbondes for to dye 748
 That oon for loue / that oother was for hate
 Lyma hir housbonde / on an euen late
 Empoysoned hath / for þat she was his fo
 Lucy likerous / loued hir housbonde so 752
 That for he sholde alwey / vp-on hir thynke
 She yaf hym / swich a manere loue drynke
 That he was deed / er it were by the morwe
 And thus algates / housbondes han sorwe 756
 ¶ Thanne tolde he me / how þat oon latumyus
 Compleygned / vn-to his felawe Arrius
 That in his gardyn / growed swich a tree
 On which he seyde / how þat hise wyues thre 760
 Honged hem self / for hertes despitus
 ¶ O leue brother / quod this Arrius
 yif me a plante / of thilke blessed tree
 And in my gardyn / planted shal it be 764
 ¶ Of latter date of wyues / hath he red
 That somme han slayn / hir housbondes in hir bed
 And lete hir lechour / dighte hire al the nyght
 Whan þat the corps / lay in the floor vp ryght 768
 ¶ And somme / han dryuen nayles in hir brayn
 Whil þat they sleepe / and thus they han hem slayn
 ¶ Somme han hem yeuen poyssoun / in hir drynke
 He spak moore harm / than herte may bithynke 772
 And ther with al / he knew of mo prouerbes
 Than in this world / ther growen gras or herbes
 Bet is quod he / thyn habitacioun
 Be with a leon / or a foul dragoun 776
 Than with a womman / vsyng for to chide
 Bet is quod he / hye in the roof abyde
 Than with an angry wyf / down in the hous
 They been so wikked / and contrarious 780

They haten / that hir housbondes loueth ay
 He seyde / a womman / cast hir shame away
 Whan she cast of hir smokt and forther mo [leaf 67, back]
 A fair womman / but she be chaast also 784
 Is lyk a gold ryngt in a sowes nose
 Who wolde wene / or who wolde suppose
 The wo / that in myn herte was and pyne
 ¶ And whan I say / he wolde neuere fyne 788
 To reden / on this cursed book al nyght
 Al sodeynly / thre leues / haue I plyght
 Out of his bookt right as he radde / and eke
 I with my fist so took [him] on the cheke 792
 That in oure fyr/ he fil bakward adown
 And he vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun
 And with his fest/ he smoot me on the heed
 That in the floor / I lay as I were deed 796
 And whan he say / how stille þat I lay
 He was agast and wolde haue fled his way
 Til atte laste / out of my swowgh I brayde
 O hastow slayn me / false thief I sayde 800
 And for my land / thus hastow mordred me
 Er I be deed / yet wol I kisse thee
 ¶ And neer he cam / and kneled faire adown
 And seyde / deere suster Alisoun 804
 As help me god / I shal thee neuere smyte
 That I haue doon / it is thy self to wyte
 fforyeue it me / and that I thee biseke
 And yet eft soones / I hitte hym on the cheke 808
 And seyde thief/ thus muchel am I wreke
 Now wol I dye / I may no lenger speke
 ¶ But at the laste / with muchel care and wo
 We fille acorded / by vs seluen two 812
 He yaf me / al the brydel in myn hond
 To han the gouernance / of hous and lond
 And of his tonge / and his hond also
 And made hym brenne his bookt anon right tho 816

And whan that I hadde / gotten vn-to me
 By maistrye / al the soueraynetee
 And þat he seyde / myn owene trewe wyf
 Do as thee lust the *terme* of al thy lyf 820
 Keepe thyn honour / and keepe eek myn estaat
 After that day / we hadde neuere debaat/
 God help me so / I was to hym as kynde [leaf 68]
 As any wyf / from Denmark' vn-to Inde 824
 And also trewe / and so was he to me
 I pray to god / that sit in magestee
 So blesse his soule / for his mercy deere
 Now wol I seye my tale / if ye wol heere 828

[*The Wrangle between the Summoner and Friar.*]

The frere logh / whan he hadde herd al this
 Now dame quod he / so haue I ioye / or blys
 This is a long preamble / of a tale
 And whan the Somnour / herde the frere gale 832
 ¶ Lo quod the Somnour / goddes armes two
 A frere / wol entremette hym euere mo
 Loo goode men / a flye / and eek a frere
 Wol falle in euery dyssh and matere 836
 What spekestow / of preambulacioun
 What amble / or trotte / or pees / or go sit down
 Thow lettest oure disport in this manere
 ¶ Ye woltow so / sir Somnour / quod the frere 840
 Now by my feith / I shal er that I go
 Telle of a Somnour / swich a tale / or two
 That al the folk / shal laughen in this place
 ¶ Now ellis frere / I wol bishrewe thy face 844
 Quod this Somnour / and I bishrewe me
 But if I telle tales / two or thre
 Of freres / er I come to Sydyngborne
 That I shal make / thyn herte for to morne 848

ffor wel I woot^t thy pacience is gon

¶ Oure hoost^t cryde pees / and that anon

And seyde / lat the womman / telle hir tale

Ye fare as folk / that dronken ben of Ale 852


Do dame / tel forth youre tale / and that is best^t

¶ Al reddy sire quod she / right as yow lest^t

If I haue licence / of this worthy frere

¶ Yis dame quod he / tel forth / and I wol heere 856

¶ Here endeth the prologe of the Wyf of Bathe 𐀚

¶ Here bigynneth the tale / of the Wyf of Bathe 
[leaf 68, back]

IN tholde dayes / of the kyng Arthour
 Of which that Britons / speken greet honour
 Al was this land / fulfild of ffairye
 The Elf queene / with hir ioly compaignye 860
 Daunced ful ofte / in many a grene mede
 This was / the olde opynyon / as I rede
 I speke / of many hundred yerys ago
 But now kan no man / se none Elues mo 864
 ffor now the grete charitee / and prayeres
 Of lymytours / and othere holy freres
 That serchen / euery lond and euery stream
 As thikke / as motes in the sonne beam 868
 Blessynge halles / chambres / kichenen boures
 Citees / Burghes / Castels / hye Toures
 Thropes / Bernes / Shipnes / dayeryes
 This maketh / þat ther been no fairyes 872
 ffor ther as wont to walken was an Elf
 Ther walketh now / the lymytour hym self
 In vndermelys / and in morwenynges
 And seith his matyns / and his holy thynges 876
 As he gooth / in his lymytacioun
 Wommen / may go saufly vp and down
 In euery bussh / or vnder euery tree
 Ther is noon oother Incubus / but he 880
 And he ne wol doon hem / but dishonour
 ¶ And so bifel / that this kyng Arthour
 Hadde in his hous / a lusty Bachiler
 That on a day / cam ridyng fro Ryuer 884

And happed that allone / as he was born
 He say a mayde / walkynge hym biforn
 Of which mayde / anoon maugree hir hed
 By verray force / he rafte hir maydenhed 888
 ffor which oppressioun / was swich clamour
 And swich pursuyte / vn-to the kyng Arthour
 That dampned was this knyght/ for to be deed
 By cours of lawe / and sholde han lost his heed 892
 Par auenture / swich was the statut tho [leaf 69]
 But that the queene / and othere ladyes mo
 So longe preyden / the kyng of grace
 Til he his lyf / hym graunted in the place 896
 And yaf hym to the queene / al at hir wille
 To chese / wheither she wolde / hym saue or spille
 The queen thanked the kyng with al hir might
 And after this / thus spak she to the knyght 900
 Whan that she saw / hir tyme vp-on a day
 Thow standest yet quod she / in swich array
 That of thy lyf / yet hastow no suretee
 I graunte thee lyf / if thow kanst tellen me 904
 What thyng is it^t þat wommen moost desiren
 Be war / and keepe thy nekke boon from Iren
 And if thow kanst nat / tellen me anon
 Yet wol I yeue thee leue / for to gon 908
 A twelf monthe and a day / to seche and lere
 An answeere suffisant^t in this matere
 And seuretee wol I han / er that thow pace
 Thy body / for to yelden / in this place 912
 ¶ Wo was this knyght/ and sorwefully he siketh
 But what^t he may nat doon / al as hym liketh
 And atte laste / he chees hym for to wende
 And come agayn / right at the yeres ende 916
 With swich answeere / as god wolde hym purueye
 And taketh his leue / and wendeth forth his weye
 He seketh euery hous / and euery place
 Where as he hopeth / for to fynde graco 920

To lerne / what thyng' wommen loue moost
 But he ne koude / arryuen in no coost'
 Where as he myghte fynde / in this matere
 Two creatures / acordyng' in feere 924
 ¶ Somme seyden / wommen louen best richesse
 Somme seyde honour / somme seyde Iolifnesse
 Somme riche array / somme lust abedde
 And ofte tyme / to be widwe and wedde 928
 Somme seyde / that oure herte / is moost esed
 Whan that we been / yflatered and yplesed
 He gooth ful ny the sothe / I wol nat lye
 A man shal wynne vs best / with flaterye 932
 And with attendaunce / and with bisynesse [leaf 69, back]
 Been we ylymed / bothe moore and lesse
 ¶ And somme seyn / þat we louen best
 ffor to be free / and do as vs lest' 936
 And that no man / repreue vs of oure vice
 But seye þat we be wise / and no thyng nyce
 ffor trewely / ther is noon of vs alle
 If any wight' wolde clawe vs on the galle 940
 That we nyl like / for he seith vs sooth
 Assay / and he shal fynde it' that so dooth
 ffor be we / neuer so vicious / with-Inne
 We wol be holden wise / and clene of synne 944
 ¶ And somme seyn / that greet delit han we
 ffor to be holden / stable and eek secree
 And in o purpos / stedefastly to dwelle
 And nat biwreye thyng' that men vs telle 948
 But that tale / is nat worth a Rake stele
 Pardee / we wommen / konne no thyng hele
 Witnesse on Mida / wol ye heere the tale
 ¶ Ouyde / amonges othere thynges smale 952
 Seyde / Mida / hadde vnder his longe herys
 Growynge vp on his heed / two Asses erys
 The which vice he hidde / as he best myghte
 fful sotilly / from euery mannes sighte 956

That saue his wyf / ther wiste of it na mo
 He loued hire moost' and trusted hire also
 He preyed hire / that to no creature
 She sholde tellen / of his diffigure 960
 ¶ She swoor hym nay / for al this world to wynne
 She nolde do / that vileynye / or syn
 To make hir housbonde / han so foul a name
 She nolde nat telle it' for hir owene shame 964
 But nathelees / hir thoughte þat she dyde
 That she so longe / sholde a conseil hyde
 Hir thoughte / it swal so soore aboute hir herte
 That nedely / som word / hir moste asterte 968
 And sith / she dorste nat telle it to no man
 Doun to a Marys / faste by she ran
 Til she cam there / hir herte was a fyre
 And as a Bitore / bombleth in the Myre 972
 She leyde hir mouth / vn-to the water down [leaf 70]
 Biwrey me nat' thow water with thy sown
 Quod she / to thee I telle it and namo
 Myn housbonde / hath longe Asses erys two 976
 Now is myn herte al hool / now it is oute
 I myghte no lenger / kepe it out of doute
 Heere may ye see / thogh we a tyme abyde
 Yet out it moot' we kan no conseil hyde 980
 The remenant of the tale / if ye wol heere
 Redeth Ouyde / and ther ye may it leere
 ¶ This knyght' of which my tale is specially
 Whan that he say / he myghte nat come ther by 984
 This is to seye / what wommen louen moost'
 With-Inne his brest' ful sorweful was the goost
 But hom he gooth / he myghte nat soiorne
 The day was come / that homward moste he torne 988
 And in his wey / it happed hym to ryde
 In al this care / vnder a fforest syde
 Wher as he say / vp on a daunce go
 Of ladyes .xxiiij. and yet mo 992

Toward the whiche daunce / he drow ful yerne
 In hope / that som wisdom sholde he lerne
 But *certeynly* / er he cam fully there ·
 Vanysshed was this daunce / he nyste where 996
 No creature say he / that bar lyf
 Saue on the grene / he say sittyng a wyf
 A fouler wight^t ther may no man deuyse
 Agayn the knyght^t this olde wyf gan ryse 1000
 And seyde sire knyght^t heer forth ne lyth no wey
 Tel me / what þat ye seken by youre fey
 Par auenture / it may the bettre be
 This olde folk^t konne muchel thyng quod she 1004
 ¶ My leue moder / quod this knyght *certeyn*
 I nam but deed / but if that I kan seyn
 What thyng it is / that wommen moost desire
 Koude ye me wisse / I wolde wel quyte youre hyre 1008
 ¶ Plight me thy trouthe / here in myn hand quod she
 The nexte thyng^t that I requere thee
 Thow shalt it do / if it lye in thy myght^t
 And I wol telle it yow / er it be nyght^t 1012
 ¶ Haue here my trouthe / quod the knyght I graunte [1170, bk]
 ¶ Thanne quod she / I dar me wel anaunte
 Thy lyf is sau^f/ for I wole stonde ther by
 Vp-on my lyf/ the queene wol seye as I 1016
 Lat see / which is the proudeste of hem alle
 That wereth on / a couerchief / or a calle
 That dar seye nay / of that I shal thee teche
 Lat vs go forth / with-uten lenger speche 1020
 Tho rowned she / a pistel in his ere
 And bad hym to be glad / and haue no fere
 ¶ Whan they be comen to the Court^t this knyght^t
 Seyde / he hadde holde his day / as he had hight^t 1024
 And redy was his answe^re / as he sayde
 fful many a noble wyf^t and many a mayde
 And many a widwe / for þat they ben wise
 The queene hir self / sittyng as Iustise 1028

Assembled been / this answerd for to here
 And afterward / this knyght was bode appere
 To euery wight^t comanded was silence
 And that the knyght^t sholde telle in audience 1032
 What thyng^t that worldly wommen louen best^t
 This knyght^t ne stood nat stille as dooth a best^t
 But to his question / anon answerde
 With manly voys / that al the court it herd 1036
 ¶ My lige lady / generally quod he
 Wommen desire / to haue souereyntee
 As wel / ouer hir housbonde / as hir loue
 And for to been in maistrie / hym aboue 1040
 This is youre mooste desir / thogh ye me kille
 Dooth as yow list^t I am here at youre wille
 ¶ In al the Court^t ne was ther wyf ne mayde
 Ne wydwe / that contraryed that he sayde 1044
 But seyden / he was worthy han his lyf
 ¶ And with that word / vp stirte that olde wyf
 Which that the knyght^t say sitting on the grene
 Mercy quod she / my souereyn lady queene 1048
 Er that youre Court departe / do me right^t
 I taughte this answerd / vn-to the knyght^t
 ffor which / he plighte me his trouthe there
 The firste thyng^t I wolde hym requere 1052
 He wolde it do / if it laye in his myght^t [leaf 71]
 Bifore the court^t thanne preye I thee sire knyght^t
 Quod she / that thow me take vn-to thy wyf
 ffor wel thow woost^t that I haue kept thy lyf 1056
 If I seye fals / sey nay vp-on thy fey
 ¶ This knyght answerde / allas and weilawey
 I woot right wel / that swich was my biheste
 ffor goddes loue / as chees a newe requeste 1060
 Taak al my good / and lat my body go
 ¶ Nay thanne quod she / I shrewe vs bothe two
 ffor thogh þat I be foul / old / and poore
 I nolde for al the metal / ne for oore 1064

That vnder erthe is graue / or lith aboue
 But if thy wyf I were / and eek thy loue
 ¶ My loue quod he / nay my dampnaciō
 Allas / that any of my naciō 1068
 Sholde euere / so foule disparaged be
 But al for noght^t thende is this / that he
 Constreyned was / he nedes moste hir wedde
 And taketh his olde wyf / and goth to bedde 1072
 ¶ Now wolden som men / seye *par* auenture
 That for my neeligence / I do no cure
 To tellen yow / the ioie / and al tharray
 That at the feste / was that ilke day 1076
 To which thyng^t shortly / answere I shal
 I seye / ther nas no ioie / ne feste at al
 Ther nas but heuynesse / and mucche sorwe
 ffor priuely / he wedded hire on morwe 1080
 And al day after / hidde hym as an Owle
 So wo was hym / his wyf looked so foule
 ¶ Greet was the wo / the knyght hadde in his thought^t
 Whan he was with his wyf / a bedde ybrought^t 1084
 He walweth / and he turneth to and fro
 His olde wyf / lay smylyng euere mo
 And seyde / o deere housbonde benedicite
 ffareth euery knyght thus with his wyf / as ye 1088
 Is this the lawe / of kyng Arthures hous
 Is euery knyght of his / thus daungerous
 I am youre owene loue / and youre wyf
 I am she / which that saued hath youre lyf 1092
 And *certes* / yet ne dide I yow neuere vnright^t [leaf 71, back]
 Why fare ye thus with me / this firste nyght^t
 Ye faren lyk a man / hadde lost his wit
 What is my gilt / for goddes loue tel it 1096
 And it shal ben amended / if I may
 ¶ Amended quod this knyght^t allas nay / nay
 It wol nat ben amended neuere mo
 Thow art so loothly / and so old also 1100

And ther-to comen / of so lowe a kynde
 That litel wonder is / thogh I walwe and wynde
 So wolde god / myn herte wolde breste
 ¶ Is this quod she / the cause of youre vnreste 1104
 ¶ Ye *certeynly* quod he / no wonder is
 ¶ Now sire quod she / I koude amende al this
 If that me liste / er it were dayes thre
 So wel ye myghte / bere yow vn-to me 1108
 ¶ But for ye speken of swich gentillesse ¶ *Nota bene.*
 As is descended / out of old richesse
 That therfore / sholden ye be gentil men
 Swich errogañce / is nat worth an hen 1112
 Looke who þat is / moost *vertuous* alway
 Pryuee and apert^t and moost entendeth ay
 To do / the gentil dedes / þat he kan
 Taak hym / for the gentileste man 1116
 Crist/ wol we clayme of hym oure gentillesse
 Nat of oure eldres / for hir old richesse
 ffor thogh they yeue vs / al hir heritage
 ffor which we clame / to been of hir parage 1120
 Yet may they nat biquethe / for no thyng^t
 To noon of vs / hir *vertuous* lyuyng^t
 That made hem / gentil men ycalled be
 And bad vs / folwen hem in swich degree 1124
 ¶ Wel kan / the wise poete of fflorence
 That highte Dant^t speken in this sentence
 Lo / in swich manere rym / is Dantes tale
 fful selde vp riseth / by his brañches smale 1128
 Prowesse of man / for god of his prowesse
 Wole /. that of hym / we clayme oure gentillesse
 ffor of oure eldres / may we no thyng clayme
 But temporel thyng^t that man may hurte and mayme 1132
 Eek euery wight^t woot this as wel I [leaf 72]
 If gentillesse / were planted naturelly
 Vn-to a *certeyn* lynage / doun the lyne
 Pryuee and apert^t thanne wolde they neuere fyne 1136

To doon / of gentillesse / the faire office
 They myghte do / no vileynye or vice
 ¶ Taak fyr / and bere it in the derkeste hous
 Bitwix this / and the mount of kaukasous 1140
 And lat men shette the dores / and go themne
 Yet wol the fyr / as faire lye and brenne
 As twenty thousand men / myghte it biholde
 His office naturel / ay wol it holde 1144
 Vp peril of my lyf til that it dye
 Here may ye se wel / how þat genterye
 Is nat annexed / to possession
 Sith folk ne doon hir operacion 1148
 Alwey / as dooth the fyr lo in his kynde
 ffor god it woot men may wel often fynde
 A lordes sone / do shame and vileynye
 And he þat wol han prys / of his gentrye 1152
 ffor he was born / of a gentil hous
 And hadde hise eldres / noble and vertuous
 And nyl hym seluen / do no gentil dedis
 Ne folwen his gentil Auncestre / that deed is 1156
 He nys nat gentil / be he duc or Erl
 ffor vileynes synful dedes / maken a cherl
 ffor gentillesse / nys but renomee
 Of thyne Auncestres / for hir hye bountee 1160
 Which is straunge thyng for thy persone
 Thy gentillesse / cometh fro god allone
 Thanne comth / oure verray gentillesse of grace
 It was no thyng biquethe vs / with oure place 1164
 Thenketh how noble / as seith Valerius
 Was thilke / Tullius hostillius
 That out of pouerte / roos to heigh noblesse
 Redeth Senek and redeth eek Boece 1168
 Ther shul ye seen expres / þat no drede is
 That he is gentil / that dooth gentil dedis
 And therfore / leue housbonde / I thus conclude
 Al were it that myne Auncestres weren rude 1172

Yet may the hye god / and so hope I / [leaf 72, back]
 Graunte me grace / to lyuen *vertuously*
 Thanne am I gentil / whan þat I bigynne
 To lyuen *vertuously* / and weyue synne 1176
 ¶ And ther as ye / of pouerte me repreue
 The hye god / on whom þat we bileue
 In wilful pouerte / chees to lyue his lyf
 And certes euery man / mayden / or wyf 1180
 May vnderstonde / þat Ihesus heuene kyng
 Ne wolde nat chese / a vicious lyuyng
 Glad pouerte / is an honeste thyng *certeyn*
 This wol Senek^t and othere clerkes seyn 1184
 Who so þat halt hym payd / of his pouerte
 I holde hym riche / al hadde he nat a sherte
 He that coueiteth / is a poure wight
 ffor he wolde han / that is nat in his myght 1188
 But he þat noght hath / ne coueiteth haue
 Is riche / al thogh we holde hym but a knaue
 Verray pouerte / is synne *propely*
 Iuuenal seith / of pouerte myrily 1192
 ¶ The poure man / whan he gooth by the weye
 Biforn the theues / he may synge and pleye
 Pouerte is hateful good / and as I gesse
 A ful greet bryngere / out of bisynesse 1196
 A greet amendere eek^t of Sapience
 To hym / that taketh it in pacience
 Pouerte is thyng^t al thogh it seme elenge
 Possession / that no wight wol chalenge 1200
 Pouerte ful often / whan a man is lowe
 Maketh hym self / and eek his god to knowe
 Pouerte / a spectacle is / as thynketh me
 Thurgh which he may / his verray freendes se 1204
 And therfore sire / syn þat I noght yow greue
 Of my pouerte / namoore ye me repreue
 ¶ Now sire / of elde ye repreue me
 And *certes* sire / thogh noon auctoritee 1208

Were in no book/ ye gentils of honour
 Seyn / þat men an old wight^t sholde doon fauour
 And clepe hym fader / for youre gentilesse
 And Auctours / shal I fynden / as I gesse 1212
 ¶ Now ther ye seye / that I am foul and old [leaf 73]
 Thanne drede yow noght^t to been a Cokewold
 ffor filthe and elde / al-so mote I thee
 Been grete wardeyns / vp-on chastitee 1216
 But nathelees / syn I knowe youre delit/
 I shal fulfille / youre worldly appetit^t
 ¶ Chees now quod she / oon of thise thinges tweye
 To han me foul and old / til that I deye 1220
 And be to yow / a trewe humble wyf
 And neuere yow displese / in al my lyf
 Or ellis / ye wol han me / yong and fair
 And take youre auenture / of the repair 1224
 That shal be to youre hous / by cause of me
 Or in som oother place / may wel be
 Now chees your seluen / wheither þat yow liketh
 ¶ This knyght auyseth hym / and soore siketh 1228
 But atte laste / he seyde in this manere
 My lady and my loue / and wyf so deere
 I putte me / in youre wise gouernañce
 Cheseth youre self^t which þat may be moost plesañce 1232
 And moost honour to yow / and me also
 I do no fors / the wheither of the two
 ffor as yow liketh / it suffiseth me
 ¶ Than haue I gete / of yow maistrye / quod she 1236
 Syn I may chese / and gouerne as me lest^t
 ¶ Ye certes wyf quod he / I holde it best^t
 ¶ Kys me quod she / we be no lenger wrothe
 ffor by my trouthe / I wol be to yow bothe 1240
 This is to seyn / ye bothe fair and good
 I pray to god / that I mote steruen wood
 But I to yow / be al so good and trewe
 As euere was wyf/ syn þat the world was newe 1244

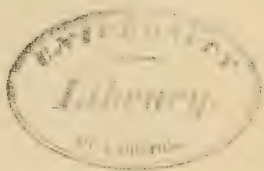
And but I be to morn / as fair to sene
 Ay any lady / Emperice / or Queene
 That is bitwix the Est^t and eek the West^t
 Do with my lyf/ and deth / right as yow lest^t 1248
 Cast vp the Curtyn / looke how þat it is
 And whan the knyght^t say verrailly al this
 That she so fair was / and so yong ther-to
 ffor ioye he hente hire / in his armes two 1252
 His herte bathed / in a bath of blisse [leaf 73, back]
 A thousand tyme a rewe / he gan hir kisse
 And she obeyed hym / in euery thyng^t
 That myghte do hym plesance / or likyng^t 1256
 And thus they lyue / vn-to hir lyues ende
 In parfit ioye / and Ihesu crist vs sende
 Housbondes meke / yonge / and fressh a bedde
 And grace / touerbyde hem that we wedde 1260
 And eek/ I praye Ihesu shorte hir lyues
 That noght wol be gouerned / by hir wyues
 And olde / and angry nygardes of dispence
 God sende hem soone / verray pestilence 1264

¶ Here endeth the Wyues tale of Bathe

¶ The prologe of the freres tale [on leaf 73, back]

This worthy lymytour / this noble frere
 He made al wey / a manere louryng cheere
 Vp on the Somnour / but for honestee
 No vileyns word / as yet to hym spak he 1268
 But atte laste / he seyde vn-to the wyf
 Dame quod he / god yeue yow right good lyf
 Ye han heer touched / al so mote I thee
 In scole matere / greet difficultee 1272
 Ye han seyd muche thyng^t right wel I seye
 But dame / here as we ryden by the weye
 Vs nedeth nat^t to speken / but of game
 And lete Auctoritees / on goddes name 1276
 To prechyng^t and to scole of clergye
 But^t if it like / to this compaignye
 I wol yow / of a Somnour telle a game
 Pardee / ye may wel knowe by the name 1280
 That of a Somnour / may no good be sayd
 I praye / that noon of yow / be ypayd
 A somnour / is a rennere vp and down
 With mandementz / for fornicacioun 1284
 And is ybet^t at euery townes ende
 ¶ Oure hoost tho spak / a sire / ye sholde be hende
 And curteys / as a man of youre estaat^t [leaf 74]
 In compaignye / we wol no debaat^t 1288
 Telleth youre tale / and lat the Somnour be
 ¶ Nay quod the Somnour / lat hym seye to me
 What so hym list^t whan it comth to my lot^t
 By god / I shal hym quyten euery grot^t 1292
 I shal hym telle / which a gret honour
 It is / to be a flaterynge lymytour
 And of / many another manere cryme
 Which nedeth nat rehereen / for this tyme 1296
 And his office / I schal hym telle ywys
 ¶ Oure hoost answerde / pees namoore of this
 And after this / he seyde vn-to the frere
 Tel forth youre tale / leue maister deere 1300
 Here endeth the prologe of the frere

and bigynneth his tale



W Hilom / ther was dwellynge in my contree
 An Erchedekne / a man of hy degree
 That boldely / dide execucion
 In punysshynge of ffornicacion 1304
 Of wicchecraft¹ and eek of Bawderye
 Of diffamacion / and auoutrye
 Of chirche Reues / and of testamentz
 Of contractes / and eek of lakke of sacramentz 1308
 Of vsure / and of Symonye also
 But *certes* / lecchours / dide he grettest wo
 They sholde synge²n if that they were hent<sup>[² From here to the
end of this line is in
a later 15th-century
hand in the MS.]</sup>
 And smale tyth²eres were foule yschent¹
 If any per^{son} /² wold vp-on hem pleyne
 Ther myghte² asterte hym no pecunial payne
 ffor smale² tithes & for smal offryng¹
 He made the² peple ful pitusly to syng¹ 1316
 ffor er the² bysschop caght hem *with* hys hooc
 They were² in the erchdeknys book/
 And thanne² had he thurgh hys Iurisdiccioñ
 Power / to² do on hem correccion 1320
 He hadde a Somnour / redy to his hond [leaf 74, back]
 A slyer boy / nas noon in Engelond
 ffor subtilly / he hadde his espiaille
 That taughte hym / wher hym myghte auaille 1324
 He koude spare / of lecchours / oon or two
 To techen hym / to foure and twenty mo
 ffor theigh this Somnour / wood were as an hare
 To telle his harlotrye / I wol nat spare 1328

ffor we been / out of his correccion
 They han of vs / no Iurisdiccioñ
 Ne neuere shullen / terme of hir lyues
 ¶ Peter / so been the wommen of the styves 1332
 Quod this Somnour / yput out of my cure
 ¶ Pees with myschaunce / and with mysauenture
 Thus seyde oure hoost / and lat hym telle his tale
 Now telleth forth / thogh þat the Somnour gale 1336
 Ne spareth nat' myn owene mayster deere
 ¶ This false theef' this Somnour / quod the frere
 Hadde alwey / baudes redy to his hond
 As any hauk' to lure in Engelond 1340
 That tolde hym / al the secree þat they knewe
 ffor hire aqueyntance / was nat come of newe
 They weren / hise Approwours pryuely
 He took hym self / a greet profit ther by 1344
 His maister knew nat alwey / what he wan
 With-uten mandement' a lewed man
 He koude somne / on peyne of cristes curs
 And they were glade / for to fille his purs 1348
 And make hym / grete festes atte nale
 And right as Iudas / hadde purses smale
 And was a theef/ right swich a theef was he
 His maister / hadde but half his duetee 1352
 He was / if I shal yeuen hym his laude
 A theef / and eek a somnour / and a baude
 He hadde eek wenches / at his retenue
 That wheither þat sir Robert / or sire hewe 1356
 Or Iakke / or Rauf' or who so that it were
 That lay by hem / they tolde it in his ere
 Thus was the wenche and he / of oon assent'
 And he wolde fecche / a feyned mandement' 1360
 And somne hem to Chapitre / bothe two [leaf 75]
 And pile the man / and lete the wenche go
 ¶ Thanne wolde he seye / freend I shal for thy sake
 Do stryke hire / out of oure lettres blake 1364

Thee thar namore / as in this cas trauaille
 I am thy freend / ther I thee may auaille
 Certeyn / he knew of bryberyes mo
 Than possible is / to telle in yeres two 1368
 ffor in this world / nys dogge for the bowe
 That kan an hurt deer / from an hool knowe
 Bet than this Somnour / knewe a sly lecchour
 Or an Auouter / or a paramour 1372
 And for that was / the fruyt of al his rente
 Ther-fore on it he sette al his entente
 ¶ And so bifel / that ones on a day
 This Somnour / euere waityng on his pray 1376
 ffor to somne an old wydewe / a Ribibe
 ffeynyng a cause / for he wolde brybe
 Happed / that he say / bfore hym ryde
 A gay yeman / vnder a fforest syde 1380
 A bowe he bar / and arwes brighte & kene
 He hadde vp-on / a courtepy of grene
 An hat vp-on his heed / with frenges blake
 ¶ Sire quod this Somnour / hayl / and wel atake 1384
 ¶ Wel come quod he / and euery good felawe
 Where ridestow / vnder this grene shawe
 Seyde this yeman / wiltow fer to day
 ¶ This Somnour hym answerde / and seyde nay 1388
 Here faste by quod he / is myn entente
 To ryden / for to reysen vp a rente
 That longeth / to my lordes duetee
 ¶ Artow thanne a Bailly ? / ye quod he 1392
 He dorste nat for verray filthe and shame
 Seye þat he was a Somnour / for the name
 ¶ Depardieux quod this yeman / deere brother
 Thow art a bailly / and I am another 1396
 I am vnknownen / as in this contree
 Of thyn aqueyntance / I wolde praye thee
 And eek of bretherhede / if þat yow leste
 I haue gold / and siluer / in my cheste 1400

If that thee happed to come in oure shire [leaf 75, back]
 Al shal be thyn / right as thow wolt desire
 ¶ Graunt *mercy* quod this Somnour / by my feith
 Euerich in ootheres hond / his trouthe leyth 1404
 ffor to be sworn bretheren / til they deye
 In daliaunce / they ryden forth and pleye
 ¶ This Somnour / which *pat* was / as ful of Iangles
 As ful of venym / been thise waryangles 1408
 And euere enqueryng^t vp-on euery thyng^t
 Brother quod he / where is now youre dwellyng^t
 Another day / if *pat* I sholde yow seche
 This yeman hym answerde / in softe speche 1412
 ¶ Brother quod he / fer in the North contree
 Where as I hope / som tyme I shal thee see
 Er we departe / I shal thee so wel wisse
 That of myn hous / ne shaltow neuere mysse 1416
 ¶ Now brother quod this Somnour I yow preye
 Teche me / whil *pat* we ryden by the weye
 Syn *pat* ye been a Baillyf / as am I
 Som subtiltee / and tel me feithfully 1420
 In myn office / how I may moost wyne
 And spareth nat^t for conscience ne synne
 But as my brother / tel me how do ye
 ¶ Now by my trouthe / brother deere / seyde he 1424
 As I shal tellen thee / a feithful tale
 My wages been / ful streyte / and ful smale
 My lord is hard to me / and daungerous
 And myn office / is ful laborous 1428
 And therefore / by extorcions I lyue
 ffor sothe I take / al that men wol me yeue
 Algate / by sleighte / or by violence
 ffor yeer to yeer / I wyne al my dispenche 1432
 I kan no bettre tellen / feithfully
 ¶ Now certes quod this Somnour / so fare I
 I spare nat to taken / god it woot^t
 But it be to heny / or to hoot^t 1436

What I may gete / in conseil priuely
 No manere conscience / of that haue I
 Nere myn extorcioñ / I myghte nat lyuen
 Ne of swiche Iapes / wol I nat be shryuen 1440
 Stomak' ne Conscience / ne knowe I noon [leaf 76]
 I sherewe / thise Shryftes-fadres euerychon
 Wel be we met' by god / and by Seint Iame
 But leewe brother / tel me thanne thy name 1444
 Quod this Somnour / in this mene whyle
 This yeman / gan a litel for to smyle
 ¶ Brother quod he / woltow þat I thee telle
 I am a feend / my dwellyng' is in helle 1448
 And here I ryde / aboute my purchasyng'
 To wite / wher men wol yeue me any thyng'
 My purchas / is theeffect of al my rente
 Looke how thow rydest' for the same entente 1452
 To wyne good / thow rekkest neuere how
 Right so fare I / for ryde wold I now
 Vn-to the worldes ende / for a preye
 ¶ A quod this Somnour / benedicite what sey ye 1456
 I wende / ye were a yeman trewely
 Ye han a mannes shape / as wel as I
 Han ye a figure thanne / determynat
 In helle ther ye been / in youre estat 1460
 ¶ Nay certeynly quod he / ther haue we noon
 But whan vs liketh / we kan take vs oon
 Or ellis make yow seme / we ben shape
 Som tyme / lyk a man / or lyk an Ape 1464
 Or lyk an Aungel / kan I ryde or go
 It is no wonder thyng' theigh it be so
 A lousy Iogelour / kan deceyue thee
 And pardee yet kan I / moore craft than he 1468
 ¶ Whi quod this Somnour / ryde ye thanne or goon
 In sondry shape / and nat alwey in oon
 ¶ ffor we quod he / wol vs swiche formes make
 As moost able is / oure preyes for to take 1472

¶ What maketh yow / to han al this labour
 ¶ fful many a cause / leue sire Somnour
 Seyde this feend / but alle thyng hath tyme
 The day is short / and it is passed pryme 1476
 And yet ne wan I no thyng in this day
 I wol entende / to wynnyng / if I may
 And nat entende / oure wittes to declare
 ffor brother myn / thy wit is al to bare 1480
 To vnderstonde / al-thogh I tolde hem thee [leaf 76, back]
 But for thow axest why labouren we
 ffor som tyme / we been goddes Instrumentz
 And meenes / to doon his comandementz 1484
 Whan that hym list / vp on his creatures
 In diuers art and in diuerse figures
 With-uten hym / we han no myght certayn
 If that hym lyst to stonde ther agayn 1488
 And som tyme / at oure preyere / han we leue
 Oonly the body / and nat the soule greue
 Witnesse on Iob / whom þat we diden wo
 And som tyme / han we myght of bothe two 1492
 This is to seyn / of soule and body eke
 And som tyme / be we suffred for to seke
 Vp-on a man / and do his soule vnreste
 And nat his body / and al is for the beste 1496
 Whan he with-standeth / oure temptaciō
 It is / a cause / of his sauaciō
 Al be it that it was / nat oure entente
 He sholde be sauf but þat we wolde hym hente 1500
 And som tyme / be we seruant vn-to man
 As to the Erchebisshope / Seint Dunstan
 And to the Apostles / seruant eek was I
 ¶ Yet tel me / quod the Somnour feithfully 1504
 Make ye yow newe bodyes / thus alway
 Of Elementz / the feend answerde nay
 Som tyme we feyne / and som tyme we aryse
 With dede bodyes / in ful sondry wyse 1508

And speke as renably / and faire and wel
 As to the Phitonissa / dide Samuel
 And yet wol som men seye / it was nat he
 I do no fors / of youre dyuynytee 1512
 But o thyng warne I thee / I wol nat Iape
 Thow wolt algates wite / how we be shape
 Thow shalt her afterwardes / my brother deere
 Come there / thee nedeth nat of me to lere 1516
 ffor thow shalt by thyn owene experience
 Konne in a chayer / rede of this sentence
 Bet than Virgile / whil he was on lyue
 Or Dant also / now lat vs ryde blyue 1520
 ffor I wol holde / compaignye with thee [leaf 77]
 Til it be so / that thow forsake me
 ¶ Nay quod this Somnour / that shal nat bityde
 I am a yeman / knowen is ful wyde 1524
 My trouthe wol I holde / as in this cas
 ffor theigh thow were / the deuel Sathanas
 My trouthe wol I holde / to thee my brother
 As I am sworn / and ech of vs til oother 1528
 ffor to be trewe brother / in this cas
 And bothe we goon / abouten oure purchas
 Taak thow thy part what þat men wol thee yeue
 And I shal myn / thus may we bothe lyue 1532
 And if that any of vs / haue moore than oother
 Lat hym be trewe / and parte it with his brother
 ¶ I graunte quod the deuel / by my fey
 And with that word / they ryden forth hir wey 1536
 And right at the entryng of the townes ende
 To which this Somnour / shoop hym for to wende
 They saye a Cart that charged was with hey
 Which that a Cartere / droof forth in his wey 1540
 Deep was the wey / for which the Carte stood
 This Cartere smoot and cryde as he were wood
 Hayt Brok hayt Scot what spare ye for the stones
 The feend quod he / yow fecche body and bones 1544

As ferforthly / as euere were ye foled
 So muchel wo / as I haue with yow tholed
 The deuel haue al / bothe hors / and Cart and hey
 ¶ This Somnour seyde / heer shul we han a pley 1548
 And neer the feend he drogh / as noght we were
 fful pryuely / and rowned in his ere
 Herkne my brother / herkne by thy feith
 Herestow nat how þat the Cartere seith 1552
 Hent it anon / for he hath yeue it thee
 Bothe hey / and Cart and eek his caples thre
 ¶ Nay quod the deuel / god woot neuer a del
 It is nat his entente / trust thow me wel 1556
 Axe hym thy self / if thow nat trowest me
 Or ellys stynt a while / and thow shalt se
 ¶ This Cartere / taketh his hors vp-on the croupe
 And they bigonne / drawen and to stoupe 1560
 Heyt now quod he / ther Ihesu crist yow blesse [leaf 77, back]
 And al his handes werk bothe moore and lesse
 That was wel twight myn owene lyard boy
 I pray god saue thee / and Seint loy 1564
 Now is my Cart out of the slow pardee
 ¶ Lo brother quod the feend / what tolde I thee
 Heere may ye se / myn owene deere brother
 The Carl spak o thyng but he thoghte another 1568
 Lat vs go forth / abouten oure viage
 Heere wynne I no thyng vp-on cariage
 ¶ Whan that they comen / som what out of towne
 This Somnour / to his brother gan to rowne 1572
 Brother quod he / here woneth an old rebekke
 That hadde al-moost as leef to lese hir nekke
 As for to yeue a peny / of hir good
 I wol han .xij. pens / thogh that she be wood 1576
 Or I wol somne hire / vn-to oure office
 And yet god woot of hire knowe I no vice
 But for thow canst nat as in this contree
 Wynne thy cost taak heer ensample of me 1580

This Somnour / clappeth at the wydwe's gate
 Com out quod he / thow olde virtrate
 I trowe thow hast som frere / or preest with thee
 ¶ Who clappeth seyde this wyf / benedicitee 1584
 God saue yow sire / what is youre swete wille
 ¶ I haue quod he / of somonce a bille
 Vp peyne of cursyng' looke that thow be
 To morn / bifore the Erchedeknes knee 1588
 Tanswere to the court' of *certeyn* thynges
 ¶ Now lord quod she / crist Ihesu kyng of kynges
 So wisly helpe me / as I ne may
 I haue been syk' and that ful many a day 1592
 I may nat go so fer quod she / ne ryde
 But I be deed / so priketh it in my syde
 May I nat axe a libel / sire Somnour
 And answere there / by my procutour 1596
 To swiche thyng' as men wole opposen me
 ¶ Yis quod this Somnour / pay anon lat see
 Twelf pens to me / and I wol thee acquyte
 I shal no profyt han ther by / but lyte 1600
 My Maister hath the profit / and nat I [leaf 78]
 Com of / and lat me ryden hastily
 Yif me .xij. pens / I may no lenger tarye
 ¶ Twelf pens quod she / now lady Seinte Marie 1604
 So wisly help me god / out of care and synne
 This wyde world / thogh that I sholde wyne
 Ne haue I nat .xij. pens / with-Inne myn hoold
 Ye knowen wel / that I am poure and oold 1608
 Kythe youre almesse / on me poure wrecche
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / the foule feend me fecche
 If I thexcuse / theigh thow shul be spilt'
 ¶ Allas quod she / god woot I haue no gilt' 1612
 ¶ Pay me quod he / or by the swete Seinte Anne
 As I wol bere away / thy newe panne
 ffor dette / which thow owest me of oold
 Whan þat thow madest / thyn housbonde cokewold 1616

I payde at hom / for thy correccioñ
 ¶ Thow lyxt quod she / by my sauacioñ
 Ne was I neuere er now / wydwe ne wyf
 Somoned vn-to youre court in al my lyf / 1620
 Ne neuere I nas / but of my body trewe
 Vn-to the deuel / blak and row of hewe
 Yeue I thy body / and my panne also
 ¶ And whan the deuel / herde hire cursen so 1624
 Vp-on hir knees / he seyde in this manere
 Now Mabely / myn owene moder deere
 Is this youre wyl in earnest/ *pat* ye seye
 ¶ The deuel quod she / so fecche hym er he deye 1628
 And panne and al / but he wol hym repente
 ¶ Nay olde stot that is nat myn entente
 Quod this Somnour / for to repente me
 ffor any thyng that I haue had of thee 1632
 I wolde I hadde thy smok / and euery clooth
 ¶ Now brother quod the deuel / be noght wrooth
 Thy body and this panne / been myne by right
 Thow shalt *with* me to helle / yet to nyght 1636
 Wher thow shalt knowen / of oure pryuetee
 Moore / than a maister of dyuynytee
 And with that word / this foule feend hym hente
 Body and soule / he with the deuel wente 1640
 Wher as that Somnours / han hir heritage [leaf 78, back]
 And god / that made after his ymage
 Mankynde / saue / and gyde vs alle and some
 And leue thise Somnours / goode men to bicomme 1644
 ¶ Lordynges I koude han told yow / quod the frere
 Hadde I had leyser / for this Somnour heere
 After the text/ of crist Poul and Ioñ
 And of oure othere doctours / many oon 1648
 Swich peynes / that youre hertes myghte agryse
 Al be it so / no tonge may it deuyse
 Thogh that I myghte / a thousand wynter telle
 The peynes / of thilke cursed hous of helle 1652

But for to kepe vs / fro that cursed place
 Waketh / and preyeth Ihesu for his grace
 So kepe vs / fro the temptour Sathanas
 Herketh this word / beth war as in this cas 1656
 The leon^d sit^t in his awayt alway
 To sle the Innocent^t if that he may
 Disposeth ay youre hertes / to withstonde
 The feend / that yow wolde maken thral and bonde 1660
 He may nat tempte yow / ouer youre myght^t
 ffor crist^t wol be youre champion and knyght^t
 And prayeth / that this Somnours hem repente
 Of hir mysdedes / er that the feend hem hente 1664


¶ Here endeth / the freres tale

¶ The Prologe / of the Somnours tale 𐀚 [on 1f78, bk]

This Somnour in his Stiropes / hye he stood
 Vp-on this frere / his herte was so wood
 That lyk an Aspen lief / he quook for Ire
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / but o thyng I desire 1668
 I yow biseke / that of youre curteisye
 Syn ye han herd / this false frere lye
 As suffreth me / I may my tale telle
 This frere bosteth / that he knoweth helle 1672
 And god it woot that it is litel wonder
 ffreres and feendes / been but lyte a sonder
 ffor pardee / ye han ofte tyme herd telle [leaf 79]
 How that a frere / rauysshed was to helle 1676
 In Spirit ones / by avisioun
 And as an Aungel / ladde hym vp and down
 To shewen hym / the peynes þat ther were
 In al the place / say he nat a frere 1680
 Of oother folk / he say ynowe in wo
 Vn-to this Angel / spak the frere tho
 ¶ Now Sire quod he / han freres swich a *grace*
 That noon of hem / shal come to this place 1684
 ¶ Yis quod this Aungel / many a Milioun
 And vn-to Sathanas / he ladde hym down
 And now hath Sathanas / seith he a tayl
 Brodder / than of a Carryk is the sayl 1688
 Hold vp thy tayl / thow Sathanas quod he
 Shewe forth thyn ers / and lat the frere se
 Where is thee nest of freres / in this place
 And er þat / half a furlong wey of space 1692

Right so as bees / out swarmen from an hyue	
Out of the deueles ers / ther gonne dryue	
Twenty thousand freres / on a route	
And thurgh-out helle / swarmeden aboute	1696
And comen again / as faste as they may gon	
And in his ers / they crepten euerychon	
He clapte his tayl agayn / and lay ful stille	
This frere / whan he looked hadde his fille	1700
Vp-on the tormentz / of this sory place	
His spirit ^t god restored of his grace	
Vn-to his body agayn / and he awook ^t	
But nathelees / for fere yet he quook ^t	1704
So was the deueles ers / ay in his mynde	
That is his heritage / of verray kynde	
God saue yow alle / saue this cursed frere	
My prologe / wol I ende / in this manere	1708

¶ Here endeth the prologe of the Somnours tale 𐀚

¶ Here bygynneth the Somnours tale  [leaf 79, back]

LOrdynge / ther is in Yorkshire / as I gesse
 A Merssh contree / called Holdernesse
 In which / ther wente a lymytour aboute
 To *preche* / and eek to begge / it is no doubte 1712
 And so bifel / that on a day this frere
 Hadde *preched* at a chirche / in his manere
 And specially / abouen euery thyng^t
 Excyted he the peple / in his *prechyng*^t 1716
 To trentals / and to yeue for goddes sake
 Wher-with men myghte / holy houses make
 Ther as dyuyne seruice / is honoured
 Nat ther / as it is wasted and deuoured 1720
 Ne ther / it nedeth nat^t to be yeue
 As to possessioners / that mowen lyue
 Thanked be god / in wele and habundance
 Trentals seyde he / deliuereth from penaunce 1724
 Hir freendes soules / as wel olde as yonge
 Ye / whan that they / been hastily ysonge
 Nat for to holde a preest^t Ioly and gay
 He syngeth nat^t but o masse in a day 1728
 Deliuereth out quod he / anon the soules
 fful hard it is / *with* flesh-hook / or *with* oules
 To been y-clawed / or to brenne / or bake
 Now spede yow hastily / for cristes sake 1732
 And whan this frere / hadde seyd al his entente
 With *qui cum patre* / forth his wey he wente
 Whan folk in chirche / hadde yeue hym / what hem leste
 He wente his wey / no lenger wolde he reste 1736

With scryppe and typped staf / y-tukked hye
 In euery hous / he gan to poure and pry
 And beggeth Mele / and chese / or ellis corn
 His felawe hadde a staf / typped with horn 1740
 A peyre of tables / al of yuory
 And a poyntel / polysshed fetisly
 And wroot the names / alwey as he stood
 Of alle folk / that yaf hem any good 1744
 Ascaunces / that he wolde for hem preye [leaf 80]
 Yif vs a busshel whete / Malt^t or Reye
 A goddes kechyl / or a trype of cheese
 Or ellis what yow lyst^t we may nat chese 1748
 A goddes half peny / or a masse peny
 Or yif vs of youre brawn / if ye haue eny
 A dagon of youre Blanket^t leue dame
 Oure suster deere / lo heere I write youre name 1752
 Baconⁿ / or boef / or swich thyng as ye fynde
 A sturdy harlot^t wente ay hem bihynde
 That was hir hostes man / and baar a sak^t
 And what men yaf hem / leyde it on his bak^t 1756
 And whan *that* he was out at dore anon
 He planed away / the names euerichon
 That he biforn / hadde writen in his tables
 He serued hem / with nyfles and *with* fables 1760
 ¶ Nay ther thow lixt^t thow Somnour quod the frere
 ¶ Pees quod oure hoost^t for cristes moder deere
 Tel forth thy tale / and spare it nat at al
 ¶ So thryue I quod this Somnour / so I shal 1764
 So longe he wente / hous by hous / til he
 Cam til an hous / ther he was wont to be
 Refreshed moore / than in an hundred placis
 Syk lay the goode man / whos the place is 1768
 Bedrede vp-on a couche / lowe he lay
 Deus hic quod he / O Thomas freend good day
 Seyde this frere / curteisly and softe
 Thomas quod he / god yelde yow ful ofte 1772

Haue I vp-on this bench / faren ful wel
 Heere haue I eten / many a murye mel
 And fro the bench / he droof away the cat
 And leyde adoun / his potente and his hat 1776
 And eek his scrippe / and sette hym softe adown
 His felawe / was go walked in to town
 fforth with his knaue / in-to that hostelrye
 Wher as he shoope hym / thilke nyght to lye 1780
 ¶ O deere maister / quod this syke man
 How han ye fare / sith that March bigan
 I say yow noght^t this fourtynyght^t or moore
 ¶ God woot quod he / laboured I haue ful soore 1784
 And specially / for thy sauacioñ [leaf 80, back]
 Haue I seyd / many a *precious* orisoñ
 And for oure othere freendes / god hem blesse
 I haue to day / been at youre chirche at messe [at messe *is* in a
later hand]
 And seyd a sermon / after my symple wit
 Nat al / after the text^t of holy writ
 ffor it is hard to yow / as I suppose
 And ther-fore / wol I teche yow al the glose 1792
 Glosyng^t is a glorious thyng *certeyn*
 ffor lettre sleeth / so as we clerkes seyn
 Ther haue I taught hem / to be charitable
 And spende hir good / ther it is resonable 1796
 And ther I say oure dame / a where is she
 ¶ Yond in the yerd / I trowe þat she be
 Seyde this man / and she wol come anon
 ¶ Ey maister / wel come be ye / by Seint Iohn 1800
 Seyde this wyf / how fare ye hertely
 ¶ The frere ariseth vp / ful curteisly
 And hire embraceth / in hise armes narwe
 And kiste hir swete / and chirteth as a Sparwe 1804
 With his lippes / Dame quod he / right wel
 As he / that is youre seruant^t euery del
 Thanked be god / that yow yaf soule and lyf
 Yet say I nat this day / so fair a wyf 1808

In al the chirche / god so saue me
 ¶ Ye god amende defautes / sire quod she
 Algates / wel come be ye / by my fey
 ¶ Graunt mercy dame / this haue I founde alwey 1812
 But' of youre grete goodnesse / by youre leue
 I wolde pray yow / that ye nat yow greue
 I wol with Thomas / speke a litel throwe
 Thise Curatz / been ful necligent' and slowe 1816
 To grope tendrely / a conscience
 In shrift' in *prechyng'* is my diligence
 And studie / in Petres wordes / and in Poules
 I walke / and fisshe / cristen mennes soules 1820
 To yelden Ihesu crist'. his *propre* rente
 To sprede his word / is set al myn entente
 ¶ Now by youre leue / o deere sire quod she
 Chideth hym wel / for Seinte Trinitee 1824
 He is as angry / as a Pissemyre [leaf 81]
 Thogh that he haue / al that he kan desire
 Thogh I hym wrye a nyght' and make hym warm
 And on hym leye / my leg' outhur myn arm 1828
 He groneth lyk oure boor / lyth in oure Sty
 Oother disport' right noon of hym haue I
 I may nat please hym / in no maner cas
 ¶ O Thomas Ie vous dy / Thomas / Thomas 1832
 This maketh the feend / this moste been amended
 Ire is a thyng' that hye god defended
 And ther-of / wol I speke / a word / or two
 ¶ Now maister quod the wyf / er þat I go 1836
 What wol ye dyne / I wol go ther aboute
 ¶ Now dame quod he / now Ie vous dy sanz doute
 Haue I nat of a Capon / but the lyuere
 And of youre softe breed / nat but a shyuere 1840
 And after that' a rosted pigges heed
 But þat I nolde / no beest for me were deed
 Thanne hadde I with yow / homly suffisaunce
 I am a man / of litel sustenaunce 1844

My Spirit hath his fostryng^t in the bible
 The body is ay / so redy and penyble
 To wake / that my stomak^t is destroyed
 I pray yow dame / ye be nat anoyed 1848
 Thogh I so freendly / yow my conseil shewe
 By god / I wolde nat telle it^t but a fewe
 ¶ Now sire quod she / but o word / er I go
 My child is deed / with-Inne thise wykes two 1852
 Soone after that ye wente / out of this town
 ¶ His deeth say I / by reuelacioun
 Seith this frere / at hom in oure dortour
 I dar wel seyn / that er þat half an hour 1856
 After his deeth / I say hym born to blisse
 In myn avision / so god me wisse
 So dide oure Sexteyn / and oure ffermerer
 That han been trewe freres fifty yeer 1860
 They may now / god be thanked / of his lone
 Maken hir Iubilee / and walke allone
 And vp I roos / and al oure Couent eke
 With many a teere / trikyng on my cheke 1864
 With-uten noyse / or clateryng of belles [leaf 81, back]
 Te Deum was oure song^t and no thyng elles
 Saue that to crist / I seyde an orison
 Thankynge hym / of his reuelacion 1868
 ffor sire and dame / trusteth me right wel
 Oure orisons / been wel moore effectuel
 And moore we seen / of cristes secree thynges
 Than bureH folk^t al thogh þat they were kynges 1872
 We lyue in pouerte / and in abstinence
 And bureH folk^t in richesse and dispence
 Of mete and drynke / and in hir foul delit^t
 We han this worldes lust^t al in despit 1876
 Lazar and Diues / lyueden diuersly
 And diuerse gerdon / hadde they ther-by
 Who so wol praye / he moot faste and be clene
 And fatte his soule / and make his body lene 1880

We fare as seith thapostle / clooth and foode
 Suffiseth vs / thogh they be nat ful goode
 The clenness / and the fastyng^t of vs freres
 Maketh / that crist accepteth oure prayeres 1884
 ¶ Lo Moyses / fourty dayes / and fourty nyght^t
 ffasted / er that the heighe god of myght^t
 Spak with hym / in the mountayne of Synay
 With empty wombe / fastyng many a day 1888
 Receyued he the lawe / that was writen
 With goddes fynger / and Elye wel ye witen
 In Mount Oreb / er he hadde any speche
 With hye god / that is oure lyues leche 1892
 He fasted longe / and was in contemplaunce
 Aaron / that hadde the temple in gouernaunce
 And eek / that othere preestes euerichon
 In-to the temple / whan they sholde gon 1896
 To preye for the peple / and do seruise
 They nolden drynken / in no maner wyse
 No drynke / which that myghte hem dronke make
 But there in abstinence / preye and wake 1900
 Lest that they deyden / tak hede what I seye
 But they be sobre / that for the peple preye
 War that I seye namoore / for it suffiseth
 Oure lord Ihesu / as holy writ deuyseth 1904
 Yaf vs ensample / of fastyng / and prayeres [leaf 82]
 Ther fore / we mendynantz / we sely freres
 Been wedded / to pouerte and continence
 To charitee / humblesse and abstinence 1908
 To persecucion / for rightwisnesse
 To wepyng^t misericorde and clenness
 And therfore may ye se / that oure prayeres
 I speke of vs / we mendinantz / we freres 1912
 Be to the hye god / moore acceptable
 Than youres / with youre festes at the table
 ffro Paradys first^t if I shal nat lye
 Was man out chaced / for his glotonye 1916

And chaast was man / in Paradys certeyn
 ¶ But herkne Thomas / what I shal seyn
 I ne haue no text^t of it^t as I suppose
 But I shal fynde it^t in a maner glose 1920
 That specially / oure swete lord Ihesus
 Spak this by freres / whan he seyde thus
 Blessed be they / that poure in Spirit been
 And so forth / in the gospel / may ye seen 1924
 Wher it be likker / oure professioñ
 Or hire / that swymmen in possession
 ffy on hir pompe / and hir glotonye
 And for hir lewednesse / I hem diffye 1928
 Me thynketh / they been lyk Iouynyan
 ffat as a whale / and walkyng as a swan
 Al vynolent^t as Botel in the Spence
 Hir preyere is / of ful greet reuerence 1932
 Whan they for soules / seye the psalm of Dauit
 Lo buf they seye / cor meum eructauit^t
 Who folweth cristes gospel / and his foore
 But we that humble been / and chaast/ and poore 1936
 Werkers of goddes word / nat Auditours
 Ther fore / right as an hauk / vp at a sours
 Vp spryngeth in-to theyr / right so prayeres
 Of charitable / and chaste bisy freres 1940
 Maken hir sours / to goddes erys two
 Thomas / Thomas / so mote I ryde or go
 And by that lord / that clepid is Seint yue
 Nere thow oure brother / sholdestow nat thryue 1944
 [In¹] oure chapitre / praye we day and nyght^t [leaf 82, back]
 To crist^t that he thee sende / heele and myght^t [1 Rats]
 Thy body / for to welden hastily
 ¶ God woot quod he / no thyng ther-of feele I 1948
 As help me crist^t as I in fewe yeres
 Haue spended / vp-on diuerse manere freres
 fful many a pound / yet fare I neuere the bet
 Certeyn / my good haue I almoost biset^t 1952

farwel my gold / for it is al ago
 ¶ The frere answerde / o Thomas doostow so
 What nedeth yow / diuerse freres seche
 What nedeth hym / that hath a parfit leche 1956
 To sechen / othere leches in the town
 Youre inconstance / is youre confusioun
 Holde ye thanne me / or ellis oure Couent'
 To preye for yow / been insufficient' 1960
 Thomas / that Iape / nys nat worth a myte
 Youre maladye / is for we han to lyte
 A yif that Couent' half a quarter otes
 A yif that Couent' .xxiiij. grotes 1964
 A yif that frere a peny / and lat hym go
 Nay nay Thomas / it may no thyng be so
 What is a ferthyng worth / parted in twelue
 Lo / ech thyng / that is oned in hym selue 1968
 Is moore strong' than whan it is to-scatered
 Thomas / of me / thow shalt nat been yflatered
 Thow woldest han oure labour / al for noght'
 The hye god / that al this world hath wrought' 1972
 Seith / that the werkman / worthy is his hire
 Thomas / noght of youre tresor I desire
 As for my self / but that al oure Couent'
 To praye for yow / is ay so diligent' 1976
 And for to buylden / cristes owene chirche
 Thomas / if ye wol lernen for to wirche
 Of buyldyng vp of chirches / may ye fynde
 If it be good / in Thomas lyf of Inde 1980
 Ye lye heere ful of Anger and of Ire
 With which / the deuel set youre herte afire
 And chiden heere / the sely Innocent/
 Youre wyf / that is so meke and pacient' 1984
 And ther-fore Thomas / trowe me if thee leste [leaf 83]
 Ne stryue nat with thy wyf / as for thy beste
 And bere this word away / now by thy feith
 Touchyng swich thyng' lo what the wise man seith 1988

¶ With-Inne thyn hous / ne be thow no leon
 To thy subgitz / do noon oppressiō
 Ne make thyne aqueyntances / nat for to flee
 And Thomas / yet eft soones I charge thee 1992
 Be war from hire / that in thy bosom slepeth
 War fro the serpent that so sleighly crespeth
 Vnder the gras / and styngeth subtilly
 Be war my sone / and herkne paciently 1996
 That twenty thousand men / han lost hir lyues
 ffor struyng^t with hir lemmans and hir wyues
 Now sith ye han / so holy meke a wyf
 What nedeth yow Thomas / to maken stryf/ 2000
 Their nys ywis / no serpent so cruel
 Whan man tret on his tayl / ne half so fel
 As womman is / whan she hath caught an Ire
 Vengeance is thanne / al that they desire 2004
 Ire is a synne / oon of the grete of seuene
 Abhomynable / vn-to the god of heuene
 And to hym self / it is destruccioñ
 This euery lewed viker / or parson 2008
 Kan seye / how Ire engendreth homicide
 Ire is in sooth / executour of pryde
 I koude of Ire / seye so muche sorwe
 My tale / sholde laste til to morwe 2012
 And ther-fore praye I god / bothe day and nyght
 An Irous man / god sende hym litel myght^t
 It is greet harm / and certes greet pitee
 To sette an Irous man in heigh degree 2016
WHilom / ther was an Irous potestat^t
 As seith Senek^t that durynge his estat
 Vp-on a day / out ryden knyghtes two
 And as ffortune wolde / that it were so 2020
 That oon of hem cam hom / that oother noght^t
 Anon the knyght^t bifore the Iuge is broght^t
 That seyde thus / thow hast thy felawe slayn
 ffor which / I deme thee to the deeth certayn 2024

[1 An]d to another knyght^t comanded he [leaf 83, back]
[1 *Rats*]
 Go leed hym to the deeth / I charge thee
 And happed / as they wente by the weye
 Toward the place / ther he sholde deye 2028
 The knyght cam / which men wenden had be deed
 Thanne thoghten they / it were the beste reed
 To lede hem bothe / to the Iuge agayn
 They seyden / lord / the knyght ne hath nat slayn 2032
 His felawe / heere he stant hool alyue
 ¶ Ye shul be deed quod he / so moot I thryue
 This is to seyn / bothe oon and two and thre
 And to the firste knyght^t right thus spak / he 2036
 ¶ I dampned thee / thou most algate be deed
 And thow also / most nedes lese thyn heed
 ffor thow art cause / why thy felawe deyth
 And to the thridde knyght^t right thus he seith 2040
 Thow hast nat doon / that I comanded thee
 And thus he dide / do sleen hem alle thre
 ¶ Irous Cambyses / was eek dronkelewe
 And ay delited hym / to been a shrewe 2044
 And so bifel / a lord of his meynne
 That louede / vertuous moralitee
 Seyde on a day / bitwix hem two right thus 2047
 ¶ A lord is ²lost if he be vicius² [²—² in a later hand]
 And dronkenesse / is eek a foul record
 Of any man / and namely in a lord
 Ther is ful many an eighe / and many an ere
 Awaityng on a lord / he noot nat where 2052
 ffor goddes loue / drynk moore attemprely
 Wyn maketh man / to lesen wrecchedly
 His mynde / and eek his lymes euerychon
 ¶ The reuers shaltow se / quod he anon 2056
 And preue it^t by thyn owene experience
 That wyn ne dooth to folk^t no swich offence
 Ther is no wyn / bireueth me my myght^t
 Of hond ne foot^t ne of myne eyen sight^t 2060

And for despit^t he drank ful muchel moore
 An hundred part^t than he hadde doon bifore
 And right anon / this Irous cursed wrecche
 bifore hym Leet this knyghtes sone / fecche 2064
 Comandyng hym / he sholde bifore hym stonde [leaf 84]
 And sodeynly / he took his bowe in honde
 And vp the streng^t he pulled to his ere
 And with an arwe / he slow the child right there 2068
 Now / wheither haue I / a siker hand or noon
 Quod he / is al my myght and mynde agoon
 Hath wyn byreued me / myn eye sight
 ¶ What sholde I telle / thanswere of the knyght^t 2072
 His sone was slayn / ther is namoore to seye
 Beth war ther fore / with lordes how ye pleye
 Syngeth Placebo / and I shal if I kan
 But if it be / vn-to a poure man 2076
 To a poure man / men sholde his vices telle
 But nat to a lord / thogh he sholde go to helle
 ¶ Lo Irous Syrus / thilke Percien
 How he destroyed / the ryuer of Gysen 2080
 ffor that an hors of his / was dreynt ther-Inne
 Whan that he wente / Babiloyne to wynne
 He made / that the Ryuer was so smal
 That wommen / myghte wade it ouer al 2084
 Lo what seyde he / that so wel teche kan
 Ne be no felawe / to an Irous man
 Ne with no wood man / walke by the weye
 Lest thee^r repente / I wol no ferther seye 2088
 ¶ Now Thomas leeu^e brother / lef thyn Ire
 Thow shalt me fynde / as Iust^t as is a Squyre
 Hoold nat the deueles knyf / ay at thyn herte
 Thyn angre dooth thee / al to soore smerte 2092
 But shewe to me / al thy confessiō
 ¶ Nay quod the sike man / by Seint Symon
 I haue be shryuen this day / at my Curat^t
 I haue hym toold / hoolly al myn estat^t 2096

Nedeth namoore to speke of it seith he
 But if me list^t of myn humylitee
 ¶ Yif me thanne of thy gold / to make oure cloystre
 Quod he / for many a Muscle / and many an Oystre 2100
 Whan othere men / han been ful wel at eyse
 Hath been oure foode / oure Cloystre for to reyse
 And yet god woot^t vnnethe the fundement/
 Parfourned is / ne of oure pauement^t 2104
 [1N]ys nat a tyle / yet^t with-Inne oure wones [¹Rats. leaf 84, bk]
 By god / we owen fourty pound for stones
 Now help Thomas / for hym þat harwed helle
 Or ellis mote we / oure bookes selle 2108
 And if yow lakke / oure predicaciō
 Thanne gooth the world / al to destrucciō
 ffor who so / fro this world / wolde vs bireue
 So god me saue / Thomas by youre leue 2112
 He wolde bireue / out of the world the sonne
 ffor who kan teche / and werchen as we konne
 And that is nat^t of litel tyme quod he
 But sith Elie was / or Elize 2116
 Han freres been / that fynde I of record
 In charitee / thonked be oure lord
 Now Thomas / help for Seinte charitee
 And down anon / he set hym on his knee 2120
 ¶ This sike man / weex wel neigh wood for Ire
 He wolde / that the frere / hadde been afire
 With his false dissimulaciō
 Swich thyng / as is in my possession 2124
 Quod he /^t that may I yeue and noon oother
 Ye sey me thus / how that I am youre brother
 ¶ Ye certes quod the frere / trusteth wel
 I took oure dame / oure lettre with oure sel 2128
 ¶ Now wel quod he / and som what^t shal I yeue
 Vn-to youre holy Couent^t whil I lyue
 And in thyn hand / thou shalt it han anon
 On this condiciō / and oother noon 2132

That thow departe it so / my decre brother
 That euery frere / haue as muche as oother
 This shaltow swere / on thy profession
 With-uten fraude / or cauelacioñ 2136
 ¶ I swere it quod this frere / vp-on my feith
 And ther with al / his hand in his he leith
 Lo here my feith / in me / shal be no lak
 ¶ Now thanne put thyn hand / down by my bak' 2140
 Seyde this man / and grope wel bihynde
 Bynethe my buttok' there shaltow fynde
 A thyng' that I haue hyd in pryuetee
 ¶ A thoghte this frere / that shal go with me 2144
 And down his hand / he launcheth to the clifte [leaf 85]
 In hope / for to fynde there a yifte
 And whan this sike man / felte this frere
 Aboute his tuwel / grope there and heere 2148
 Amydde his hand / he leet the frere a fart'
 Ther is no capul / drawyng in a Cart'
 That myghte han late a fart' of swich a sown
 ¶ The frere vp stirte / as dooth a wood leoun 2152
 A false cherl quod he / for goddes bones
 This hastow for despit' doon for the nones
 Thow shalt abyge this fart' if þat I may
 His meynee / which that herden this affray 2156
 Cam lepyng In / and chaced out the frere
 And forth he gooth / with a ful angry cheere
 And fette his felawe / ther as lay his stoor
 He looked / as he were a wilde boor 2160
 He grynt with his teeth / so was he wrooth
 A sturdy paas / down to the court he gooth
 Wher as ther woned / a man of greet honour
 To whom / that he was alwey confessour 2164
 This worthy man / was lord of that village
 This frere cam / as he were in a rage
 Where as this lord / sat etyng' at his boord
 Vnnethe / myghte the frere speke a woord 2168

Til atte laste / he seyde / god yow see
 ¶ This lord gan looke / and seyde benedicitee
 What frere Iohn / what manere world is this
 I se wel / that som thyng^t ther is amys 2172
 Ye looken / as the wode were ful of theuys
 Sit down anon / and tel me what youre grief is
 And it shal been amended / if I may
 ¶ I haue quod he / had a despit to day 2176
 God yelde yow / adown in youre village
 That in this world / ther nys so poure a page
 That he nolde haue / abhomynacioun
 Of that^t I haue receyued in youre toun 2180
 And yet/ ne greueth me / no thyng so soore
 As that this olde cherl / with lokkes hoore
 Blasphemed hath / oure hooly Couent eke
 ¶ Now maister quod this lord / I yow biseke 2184
 No maister sire quod he / but seruytour
 [leaf 85, back]
 Thogh I haue had in scole / that honour
 God liketh nat^t that Raby men vs calle
 Neither in Market^t nyn youre large halle 2188
 ¶ No force quod he / but tel me al youre grief
 ¶ Sire quod this frere / an odious meschief
 This day bityd is / to myn ordre and me
 And so *par consequens* / to ech degree 2192
 Of holy chirche / god amende it soone
 ¶ Sire quod the lord / ye woot what is to doone
 Distempre yow noght^t ye be my confessour
 Ye been the salt of therthe / and the sauour 2196
 ffor goddes loue / youre pacience ye holde
 Tel me youre grief/ and he anon hym tolde
 As ye han herd biforn / ye woot wel what
 The lady of the hous / ay stille sat^t 2200
 Til she hadde herd / what the frere sayde
 ¶ Ey goddes moder quod she / blisful mayde
 Is ther aught ellis / tel me feithfully
 ¶ Ma dame quod he / how thynketh yow ther by 2204

- ¶ How þat me thynketh quod she / so god me spede
 I seye / a cherl / hath doon a cherles dede
 What sholde I seye / god lat hym neuere thee
 His sike heed / is ful of vanytee 2208
 I holde hym / in a manere frenesye
- ¶ Madame quod he / by god I shal nat lye
 But I / on oother wise / may be wreke
 I shal diffame hym / ouer al wher I speke 2212
 The false blasphemour / that charged me
 To parte / that wol nat departed be
 To euery man yliche / with meschaunce
- ¶ The lord sat stille / as he were in a traunce 2216
 And in his herte / he rolled vp and down
 How hadde this cherl / ymaginacioun
 To shewe swich a probleme / to the frere
 Neuere erst er now / herde I swich matere 2220
 I trowe the deuel / putte it in his mynde
 In Arsmetrik' shal ther no man fynde
 Bifore this day / of swich a question
- Who sholde / make a demonstracion 2224
 That euery man sholde han / ylike his part/
 As of a soun / or sauour / of a fart'
 O nyce prowde cherl / I shrewe his face
- ¶ Lo sires quod the lord / with harde grace 2228
 Who euere herde / of swich a thyng' er now
 To euery man ylike / tel me how
 It is an impossible / it may nat be
 Ey nyce cherl / god lat hym neuere thee 2232
 The rumblyng of a fart' and euery soun
 Nys but of Eyr / reuerberacioun
 And there it wasteth / lite and lite away
 Ther nys no man / kan deme by my fey 2236
 If that it were / departed equally
 What lo my cherl / lo yet how shrewedly
 Vn-to my confessour / to day he spak/
 I holde hym certeynly / demonyak' 2240

Now ete youre mete / and lat the cherl go pleye
 Lat hym go hange hym self/ a deucl weye

[*The Solution of the "Probleme" by the Lord's Squire-
 and-Carver. No break in the MS.*]

¶ Now stood / the lordes Squyer at the boord
 That carf his mete / and herde word by woord 2244
 Of alle thyng^t of which I haue yow sayd
 ¶ My lord quod he / be ye nat yuele apayd
 I koude telle / for a gowne clooth
 To yow sire frere / so ye be nat wrooth 2248
 How that this fart^t sholde euene ydeled be
 Among youre Couent^t if it liked me
 ¶ Tel quod the lord / and thow shalt haue anon
 A gowne clooth / by god and by Seint Iohn 2252
 ¶ My lord quod he / whan that the weder is fair
 With-uten wynd / or perturbynge of Air
 Lat brynge a Cartwheel / heere in-to this halle
 But looke that it haue / his spokes alle 2256
 Twelf spokes / hath a Cartwheel comunly
 And brynge me thanne twelf freres / woot ye why
 For thrittene / is a Couent^t / as I gesse
 Yourre confessour heere / for his worthynesse 2260
 Shal parfourne vp / the nombre of this Couent^t
 Thanne shal they knele adown / by oon assent^t
 And to euery spokes ende / in this manere
 fful sadly / leye his nose / shal a frere 2264
 Yourre noble Confessour / ther god hym saue [leaf 86, back]
 Shal holde his nose / vp right vnder the Naue
 Thanne shal this cherl / with baly / stif and toght^t
 As any tabour / hider been ybroght^t 2268
 And sette hym on the wheel / right of this Cart^t
 Vp on the Naue / and make hym lete a fart^t
 And ye shal seen / on peril of my lyf
 By proue / which that is demonstratyf 2272

That equally / the soun of it wol wende
 And eek the styng / vn-to the spokes ende
 Saue / that this worthy man / youre Confessour
 By cause / he is a man of greet honour 2276
 Shal han the firste fruyt as reson is
 The noble vsage of freres / yet is this
 The worthy men of hem / shul first be serued
 And certeynly / he hath it wel disserued 2280
 He hath to day / taught vs so muchel good
 With prechyng in the pulput ther he stood
 That I may vouche sauf / I seye for me
 He hadde the firste smel / of fartes thre 2284
 And so wolde / al his Couent hardily
 He bereth hym / so faire and holily
 ¶ The lord / the lady / ech man / saue the frere
 Seyden / that Iankyn spak in this matere 2288
 As wel / as Euclyde / or Protholomee
 Touchynge the cherl / they seyde subtiltee
 And hy wit made hym speke / as he spak
 He nys no fool / ne no demonyak 2292
 And Iankyn hath y-wonne / a newe gowne
 My tale is doon / we been almoost at towne

¶ Here endeth the Somnours tale 𐀚

[A blank leaf follows in the MS.]

¶ Here bigynneth The Prologe of the Monkes ta^[le¹].

^[1 Bitten off by rats.]

WHan ended was my tale / of Melibee [leaf 88]
 And of Prudence / and hire benygntee 3080
 Oure hoost seyde / as I am feithful man
 And by / that precious corpus Madrian
 I hadde leuere / than a barel Ale
 That goode lief my wyf / hadde herd this tale 3084
 She nys no thyng^t of swich pacience
 As was / this Melibeus wyf Prudence
 By goddes bones / whan I bete my knaues
 She bryngeth me / the grete clobbed staues 3088
 And crieth / slee the dogges euerichon
 And breke hem / bothe bak and euery bon
 And if þat / any neighebore / of myne
 Wol nat in chirche / to my wyf enclyne 3092
 Or be so hardy / to hire to trespace
 Whan she cometh / she raumpeth in my face
 And crieth / false coward wreke thy wyf
 By corpus bones / I wol haue thy knyf 3096
 And thou shalt haue my distaf/ and go spynne
 ffor day to nyght^t right thus she wol bigynne
 Allas she seith / þat euere þat I was shape
 To wedden a Milksope / or a coward Ape 3100
 That wol been ouer-lad / of euery wight^t
 Thou darst nat stonden / by thy wyues right^t
 This is my lif^t but if þat I wol fighte
 And out at dore / anoon I moot me dighte 3104
 Or ellis I am but lost^t but if þat I
 Be lyk a wilde leon / fool hardy
 I woot wel / she wol do me sle som day
 Som neighebore / and thanne go my way 3108
 ffor I am perilous / with knyf in honde
 Al be it^t that I dar nat hire withstonde

for she is big in armes / by my feith
 That shal he fynde / þat hire mysdooth / or seith 3112
 But lat vs passe away / fro this matere
 ¶ My lord the Monk quod he / be myrie of cheere
 for / ye shul telle a tale trewely [leaf 88, back]
 Lo / Rouchestre / stant heer fasteby 3116
 Ride forth myn owene lord / brek nat oure game
 But by my trouthe / I knowe nat youre name
 Wher shal I calle yow / my lord Dann Iohn
 Or dann Thomas / or ellis Dann Albou 3120
 Of what hous be ye / by youre fader kyn
 I vow to god / thow hast a ful fair skyn
 It is a gentil pasture / ther thow goost
 Thow art nat lyk' a penannt' or a goost' 3124
 Vp-on my feith / thow art som Officer
 Som worthy Sexteyn / or som Celerer
 for by my fader soule / as to my doom
 Thow art a maister / whan thou art at hom 3128
 No poure Cloistrer / ne no novys
 But a gouernour / wily and wys
 And ther with al / of brawnes & of bones
 A wel farynge persone / for the nones 3132
 I prey god / yeue hym confusioñ
 That first thee broghte / vn-to Religioñ
 Thow woldest han been a tredefoul aright'
 Haddestow / as greet a leue as thow hast myght' 3136
 To perfourne / al thy lust in engendrure
 Thow haddest bigeten / ful many a creature
 Allas / why werestow so wyd a cope
 God yeue me sorwe / but and I were a Pope 3140
 Nat oonly thow / but euery myghty man
 Thogh he were shore / ful hye vp on his pan
 Sholde haue a wyf for al the world is lorn
 Religion / hath take vp al the corn 3144
 Of tredyng' and we borel men been shrympes
 Of feble trees / ther comen wrecched ympes

This maketh / þat oure heires beth so sklendre
 And feble / þat they may nat wel engendre 3148
 This maketh / þat oure wyues wole assaye
 Religious folk / for ye mowe bettre paye
 Of Venus paiementz / than may we
 God woot' no lussheburgh payen ye 3152
 But be nat wrooth my Lord / thogh þat I pleye
 fful ofte in game / a sooth I haue herd seye
 ¶ This worthy Monk / took al in pacience [leaf 89]
 And seyde / I wol doon al my diligence 3156
 As fer / as sowneth in to honestee
 To telle yow a tale / or two / or three
 And if yow list' to herkne hiderward
 I wol yow seyn / the lyf of Seint Edward 3160
 Or ellis first' tragedies wol I telle
 Of whiche / I haue an hundred in my Celle
 Tragedie is to seyn / a certeyn storie
 As olde bokes / maken vs memorie 3164
 Of hym / þat stood in greet prosperitee
 And is yfallen / out of heigh degree
 In to myserie / and endeth wrecchedly
 And they been / versified comunly 3168
 Of .vj. feet' whiche men clepyn Exametron
 In prose eek' been endited many oon
 And eek in metre / in many a sondry wise
 Lo this declaryng' oghte ynogh suffise 3172
 ¶ Now herkneth / if yow liketh for to heere
 But first' I yow biseke / in this matere
 Though I by ordre / telle nat thise thynges
 Be it of Popes / Emperours / or Kynges 3176
 After hir ages / as men writen fynde
 But telle hem / som bifore / and som bihynde
 As it now cometh / vn-to my remembrance
 Haueth me excused / of myn ignorance 3180



¶ Here bigynneth the Monkes tale.

I Wol biwaille / in manere of Tragedie
 The harm of hem / that stooode in heigh degree
 And fillen so / that ther nas no remedie
 To brynge hem / out of hire Aduersitee 3184
 ffor certeyn / whan þat ffortune list to flee
 Ther may no man / the cours of hire withholde
 Lat no man triste / on blynd prosperitee
 Beth war / by thise ensamples trewe and olde 3188

[*Lucifer.*]

AT lucifer / thogh he an Aungel were [leaf 89, back]
 And nat a man / at hym I wol bigynne
 ffor thogh ffortune / may noon Aungel dere
 ffrom heigh degree / yet fil he for his synne 3192
 Down in to Helle / where as he yet is Inne
 O Lucifer / brightest of Aungels alle
 Now artow Sathanas / that mayst nat twynne
 Out of Miserie / in which þat thou art falle 3196

[*Adam.*]

Lo Adam in the feld of Damysseene [this stanza is in the
 margin in a later
 15th-century hand]
 With godes owne fynger wrowt was he . .
 And nat bygeten of mannes sperme vncleue . .
 And welte al paradiis sauynge o tree . . 3200
 Had neuer wordly man so hey degre . .
 As Adam til he for mysgouernance . .
 Was dryue owt of his hey prosperitee . .
 To labour and to helle and to meschance 3204

[*Sampson.*]

LO Sampson / which that was anunciat^t Sampson.
 By the Aungel / longe er his natiuitee
 And was / to god almyghty consecrat^t
 And stood in noblesse / whil that he myghte see 3208
 Was neuere swich another / as was he
 To speke of strengthe / and ther-with hardynesse
 But to hise wyues / tolde he his secree
 Thurgh which / he slow hym self for wrecchednesse 3212

¶ Sampson / this noble almyghty champion
 With-uten wepne / saue hise hondes tweye
 He slow / and al to-rente the leon
 Toward his weddyng^t walkynge by the weye 3216
 His false wyf / koude hym so plese and preye
 Til she his conseil knew / and she vntrewe
 Vn-to his foos / his conseil gan biwreye
 And hym forsook / and took another newe 3220

¶ Thre hundred foxes / took Sampson for Ire
 And alle hir tayles / he togydre bond
 And sette the foxes tayles / alle on fire
 ffor he on euery tayl / hadde knyht a brond 3224
 And they brende / alle the cornes in that Lond
 And alle hire Olyueris / and Vynes eke
 A thousand men / he slow with his hond
 And hadde no wepne / but an Asses cheke 3228

¶ Whan they were slayn / so thursted hym / þat he
 Was wel ny lorn / for which he gan to preye
 That god / wolde on his payne / haue som pitee
 And sende hym drynke / or ellis moste he deye 3232
 And of this Asses cheke / that was dreye
 Out of a wang^t tooth / sprang anon a welle
 Of which he drank ynogh / shortly to seye
 Thus heelp hym god / as Iudicum kari telle 3236

¶ By verray force / at Gazan / on a nyght^t [leaf 90]
 Maugree Philistiens / of that Citee

The gates of the toun / he hath vp plight
 And on his bak^t yearied hem hath he 3240

Hye on an hiß / where as men myght hem se
 O noble almyghty Sampsoñ / leef and deere
 Had thow nat toold / to wommen thy secrete
 In al this world / ne hadde been thy peere 3244

¶ This Sampsoñ / neuere Ciser drank ne wyn
 Ne on his heed / cam Rasour noon ne shere
 By precept^t of the Messenger deuyñ
 ffor alle his strengthes / in his herys were 3248
 And fully .xx. wynter / yeer by yeer
 He hadde of Israel / the gouernance
 But soone / shal he wepe many a teere
 ffor wommen / shul hym bryngen to meschaunce 3252

¶ Vñ-to his lemman Dalida / he tolde
 That in his herys / al his strengthe lay
 And falsly / to his fomen she hym solde
 And slepyng in hir barm / vp on a day 3256
 She made to clippe / or shere his heer away
 And made his fomen / al this craft-espion
 And whan þat they / hym fond in this array
 They bounde hym faste / and putten out his eyen 3260

¶ But/ er his heer / was clipped or yshaue
 Ther was no bond / with which / men myghte hym bynde
 But now is he / in prisone in a Caue
 Where as they made hym / at the querne grynde 3264
 O noble Sampsoñ / strengest of mankynde
 O whilom / Iuge in glorie / and in richesse
 Now / maystow wepen / with thyne eyen blynde
 Sith thow fro wele / art falle in wrecchednesse 3268

¶ The ende of this caytif was as I shal seye
 His fomen / made a feste vp-on a day
 And made hym as hire fool / bifore hem pleye
 And this was / in a temple of greet array 3272
 But atte laste / he made a foul affray
 ffor he two pilers shook / and made hem falle
 And doun fil temple and al / and there it lay
 And slow hym self / and eek his fomen alle 3276

¶ This is to seyn / the Prynces euerychon [leaf 90, back]
 And eek thre thousand bodies / were ther slayn
 With fallyng^t of the grete temple of stoon
 Of Sampson / now wol I namoore sayn 3280
 Beth war by this ensample / old and playn
 That no men / telle hir conseil / til hir wyues
 Of swich thyng^t as they wolde han secree fayn
 If þat it touche / hir lymes / or hir lyues 3284

[*Hercules.*]

¶ Of hercules / the souereyn conquerour ¶ Hercules .
 Syngen hise werkes / laude and heigh renoun
 ffor in his tyme / of strengthe he was the flour
 He slow / and rafte the skyn fro the leoun 3288
 He of Centauros / leyde the boost adown
 He Arpies slow / the cruel briddes felle
 The golden Apples / rafte of the dragoun
 He drow out Cerberus / the hound of helle 3292

¶ He slow the cruel tyrant^t Busirus
 And made his hors / to frete hym flesh and bon
 He slow the firy serpent venymus
 Of Achilois two hornes / he brak oon 3296
 And he slow Cakus / in a Caue of stoon
 He slow the geant^t. Antheus the stronge
 He slow the grisly boor / and that anon
 And bar the heuene / on his nekke longe 3300

¶ Was neuere wight^t sith þat this world bigan
 That slew so manye monstres / as dide he
 Thurgh-out this wide world / his name ran
 What for his strengthe / and for his heigh bountee 3304
 And euery Reawme / wente he for to se
 He was so strong^t þat no man myghte hym lette
 At bothe the worldes endes / seith Trophée / ¶ Ille vates Calde-
 In stede of boundes / he a piler sette orum Trophæus. 3308

¶ A lemman / hadde this noble champion
 That highte Dian[i]ra / fressh as May
 And as thise clerkes / maken mencion
 She hath hym sent a sherte / fressh and gay 3312
 Allas this sherte / allas and weylaway
 Enuenymed was / so subtilly with alle
 That er þat he / hadde wered it half a day
 It made his flessch / al from hise bones falle 3316

¶ But natheles / somme clerkes hire excusen [leaf 91]
 By oon þat highte Nessus / þat it maked
 Be as be may / I wol hire noght accusen
 But on his bak^t the sherte he wered al naked 3320
 Til þat his flessch / was for the venym blaked
 And whan he say / noon oother remedie
 In hote coles / he hath hym seluen raked
 ffor with no venym / deigned hym to dye 3324

¶ Thus starf / this worthy myghty Hercules
 Lo who may truste on ffortune / any throwe
 ffor hym þat folweth / al this world of prees
 Er he be war / is ofte yleyd ful lowe 3328
 fful wys is he / þat kan hym seluen knowe
 Beth war / for whan þat ffortune list to glose
 Thanne waiteth she / hir man to ouerthrowe
 By swich a wey / as he wolde leest suppose 3332

[*Nebuchadnezzar.*]

The myghty trone / the precious tresor / Nabugodonosor
 The glorious ceptre / and roial maiestee
 That hadde / the kyng Nabugodonosor
 With tonge / vnnethe / may discryued be 3336
 He twies / wan Ierusalem the Citee
 The vessel of the temple / he with hym ladde
 At Babiloigne / was his souereyn see
 In which / his glorie / and his delit he hadde 3340

¶ The faireste children / of the blood roial
 Of Israel / he leet do gelde anon
 And maked ech of hem / to been his thral
 Amonges othere / Danyel was oon 3344
 That was / the wiseste child of euerychoon
 ffor he the dremes / of the kyng expowned
 Ther as in Chaldeye / clerk/ ne was ther noon
 That wiste / to what fyn his dremes sowned 3348

¶ This proude kyng^t leet make a Statue of gold
 Sixty cubites long^t and Seuene in brede
 To which ymage / he bothe yong^t and old
 Comanded to loute / and haue in drede 3352
 Or in a fourneys / ful of flambes rede
 He shal be brend / that wolde noght obeye
 But neuere / wolde assente to that dede
 Danyel / ne hise yonge felawes tweye 3356

¶ This kyng of kynges / proud was and elat^t [leaf 91, back]
 He wende / that god / þat sit in magestee
 Ne myghte hym nat bireue / of his estat
 But sodeynly / he loste his dignytee 3360
 And lyk a beest^t hym semed for to be
 And eet hey as an Oxe / and lay ther oute
 In reyn / with wilde beestes walked he
 Til certeyn tyme / was ycome aboute 3364

¶ And lyk an Egles fetheres / wax hise herys
 Hise nayles / lyk a briddes clawes weere
 Til god relessed hym / a *certeyn* yerys
 And yaf hym wit^e and thanne *with* many a teere 3368
 He thanked god / and eue^re his lyf in feere
 Was he to doon amys / or moore trespase
 And til that tyme / he leyde was on his beere
 He knew / that god / was ful of myght & grace 3372

[*Belshazzar.*]

¶ **H**is sone / which that highte Balthasar / Balthasar /
 That heeld the regne / after his fader day
 He by his fader / koude noght be war
 ffor proud he was / of herte and of array 3376
 And eek an ydolastre / was he ay
 His hye estat / assured hym in pryde
 But ffortune caste hym down / and ther he lay
 And sodeynly / his regne gan dyuyde 3380

¶ A feste he made / vn-to hise lordes alle
 Vp-on a tyme / and made hem blithe be
 And thanne hise Officers / gan he calle
 Gooth bryngeth forth / the vessels quod he 3384
 Whiche that my fader / in his prosperitee
 Out of the temple of Ierusalem / birafte
 And to oure hye goddes / thanke we
 Of honour / that oure eldres / *with* vs lafte 3388

¶ His wyf / hise lordes / and hise concubynes
 Ay dronken / whil hire appetites laste
 Out of thise noble vessels / sondry wynes
 And on a wal / this kyng^e hise eyen caste 3392
 And say an hand armlees / that wroot ful faste
 ffor feere of which / he quook / and siked soore
 This hand / *pat* Balthasar so soore agaste
 Wroot^e Mane techel phares / and namoore 3396

¶ In al that land / Magicien was noon [leaf 92]

That koude expounde / what that lettre mente

But Danyel / expowned it anoon

And seyde / Kyng' god to thy fader lente 3400

Glorie / and honour / regne / tresor / rente

And he was proud / and no thyng god ne dradde

And ther-fore / god greet wreche vp-on hym sente

And hym birefte / the regne þat he hadde 3404

¶ He was out cast' of mannes compaignye

With Asses / was his habitacioñ

And eet hey as a beest' in weet and drye

Til þat he knew / by *grace* / and by resoñ 3408

That god of heuene / han domynacioñ

Ouer euery regne / and euery creature

And thanne / hadde god of hym compassion

And hym restored / his regne and his figure 3412

¶ Eke / thow that art his sone / art proud also

And knowest' Alle thise thynges verrailly

And art rebel to god / and art his fo

Thow drank eek / of his vessel boldely 3416

Thy wyf eke / and thy wenchis synfully

Dronke of the same vessels / sondry wynys

And heriest false goddes cursedly

Therefore to thee / yshapen ful greet pyne is 3420

¶ This hand was sent fro god / that on the wal

Wroot Mane techel phares / truste me

Thy regne is doon / thow weyest noght at al

Dyuyded is thy regne / and it shal be 3424

To Medes and to Perses / yeuen quod he

And thilke same nyght' this kyng was slawe

And Darius / occupieth his degree

Though he ther to / hadde neither right ne lawe 3428

¶ Lordynges / ensample heer-by may ye take
How that in lordshipe / is no sikernesse
ffor whan ffortune / wol a man forsake
She bereth away / his regne and his richesse 3432
And eke hise freendes / bothe moore and lesse
ffor what man / þat hath freendes thurgh ffortune
Mishape / wol make hem enemys I gesse
This prouerbe / is ful sooth / and ful commune 3436

[*Zenobia.*]

CEnobia / of Palymerie queene [leaf 92, back]
As writen Perciens / of hir noblesse
So worthy was in Armes / and so keene
That no wight^t passed hire in hardynesse 3440
Ne in lynage / ne oother gentillesse
Of kynges blood of Perce / is she descended
I sey nat^t þat she hadde moost fairnesse
But of hir shape / she myghte nat been amended 3444

¶ ffrom hire childhede / I fynde þat she fledde
Office of wommen / and to wode she wente
And many / a wilde hertes blood she shedde
With Arwes brode / that she to hem sente 3448
She was so swift^t þat she anon hem hente
And whan þat she was elder / she wolde kille
Leons / Leopardes / and Beres al torente
And in hir Armes / welde hem at hir wille 3452

¶ Sche dorste / wilde beestes dennes seke
And rennen in the montaynes / al the nyght^t
And slepen vnder the buss^h / and she koude eke
Wrastlen / by verray force / and verray myght^t 3456
With any yong man / were he neuer so wight^t
Ther myghte no thyng^t in hir armes stonde
She kepte hir maydenhede / from euery wight^t.
To no man / deigned hire to be bonde 3460

¶ But atte laste / hir freendes han hire maryed
 To Onedake / a prynee of that contree
 Al were it so / that she hem longe taryed
 And ye shal vnderstande / how þat he 3464
 Hadde swiche fantasies / as hadde she
 But nathelees / whan they weere kny^{simul}t in feere
 They lyued / in ioye / and in felicitee
 ffor ech of hem / hadde oother lief and deere 3468

¶ Saue o thyng^t that she wolde neuere assente
 By no wey / that he sholde by hire lye
 But ones / for it was hir pleyn entente
 To haue a child / the world to multiplie 3472
 And also soone / as that she myghte espye
 That she was nat with childe / with that dede
 Thanne wolde she suffren hym doon his fantasye
 Eft soone / and noght but ones / out of drede 3476

¶ And if she were with childe / at thilke cast^t [leaf 98]
 Namooore / sholde he pleyen thilke game
 Til fully / .xl. dayes weren past^t
 Thanne wolde she ones / suffre hym do the same 3480
 Al were this Onedake / wilde / or tame
 He gat namooore of hire / for thus she seyde
 It was to wyues / lecherie and shame
 In oother cas / if þat men with hem pleyde 3484

¶ Two sones / by this Onedake hadde she
 The whiche she kepte / in vertu and lettrure
 But now / vn-to oure tale turne we
 I seye / so worshipful a creature 3488
 And wys ther-with / and large with mesure
 So penyble in the werre / and curteis eke
 Ne moore labour / myghte in werre endure
 Was noon / thogh al this world men sholde seke 3492

¶ Hir riche array / ne myghte nat be toold
 As wel in vessel / as in hire clothyng^t
 She was al clad / in perree and in gold
 And eek she lafte noght^t for noon huntyng^t 3496
 To haue / of sondry tonges ful knowyng^t
 Whan þat she leyser hadde / and for to entende
 To lerne bookes / was al hir likyng^t
 How she in vertu / myghte hir lyf despende 3500

¶ And shortly / of this storie for to trete
 So doughty was hire housbonde / and eek she
 That they conquered / manye regnes grete
 In thorient^t with many a fair Citee 3504
 Appertenant^t vn-to the magestee
 Of Rome / and with strong hond / heeld hem ful faste
 Ne neuere myghte / hir fomen / doon hem flee
 Ay / whil that Onedakes dayes laste 3508

¶ Hir batailles / who so list hem for to rede
 Agayn Sapor the kyng / and othere mo
 And how / þat al this proces / fil in dede
 Why she conquered / and what title ther to 3512
 And after / of hire meschief and hire wo
 How that she was / biseged and ytake
 Lat hym / vn-to my maister Petrak go
 That writ ynow of this / I vndertake 3516

¶ Whan Onedake was deed / she myghtily [leaf 93, back]
 The regnes heeld / and with hire propre hond
 Agayns hir foos / she faught so cruelly
 That ther nas kyng^t ne Prince in al that lond 3520
 That he nas glad / if he þat grace fond
 That she ne wolde / vp-on his land werreye
 With hire / they made alliance by bond
 To been in pees / and lete hire ryde and pleye 3524

¶ The Emperour of Rome / Claudius
 Ne hym biforn / the Romayn Galien
 Ne dorsten neuere / been so corageus
 Ne noon Ermyn / ne noon Egipcien 3528
 No Surryen / ne noon Arabien
 With-Inne the feeldes / þat dorste *with* hire fighte
 Lest þat she wolde / hem *with* hir handes slen
 Or with hire meynne / putten hem to flighte 3532

¶ In kynges habit wenten hire sones two
 As heires / of hir fadres regnes alle
 And Hermanno / and Thymalao
 Hir names weere / as Persiens hem calle 3536
 But ay ffortune / hath in hire hony galle
 This myghty queene / may no while endure
 ffortune / out of hir regne made hire falle
 To wrecchednesse / and to mysauenture 3540

¶ Aurelian / whan þat the gouernance
 Of Rome / cam in-to hise handes tweye
 He shoope / vp-on this queene / to doon vengeance
 And with his legions / he took his weye 3544
 Toward Cenobie / and shortly for to seye
 He made hire flee / and atte laste hire hente
 And fettred hire / and eek hire children tweye
 And wan the land / and hoom to Rome he wente 3548

¶ Amonges othere thynges / that he wan
 His Chaar / þat was *with* gold wrought & perree
 This grete Romayn / this Aurelian
 Hath with hym lad / for þat men sholde it see 3552
 Biforn his triumphe / walketh she
 With gilte cheynes / on hire nekke hangynge
 Corowned was she / as after hire degree
 And ful of perree / charged hir clothynge 3556

¶ Allas ffortune / she that whilom was [leaf 94
 Dredeful / to kynges / and to Emperoures
 Now gawreth al the peple / on hire allas
 And she that helmed was / in starko stoures 3560
 And wan by force / townes stronge and toures
 Shal on hire heed / now were a vitremyte
 And she þat bar / the Ceptre ful of floures
 Shal bere a distaf^t hire cost^t for to quyte 3564

[The modern instances which should come here, are at the end of the Tale in this MS.]

[Nero.]

Al though / that Nero were vicius / De Nerone
 As any feend / that lyth ful lowe adown 3654
 Yet he / as telleth vs Swetonius
 This wide world / hadde in subieccioun 3656
 Bothe Est^t and West^t North / and Septemtrioun
 Of Rubies / Saphires / and of perles white
 Were alle hise clothes / browded vp and doun
 ffor he in gemmes / greetly gan delite 3660

¶ Moore delicat^t moore pompous of array
 Moore proud / was neuere Emperour than he
 That ilke clooth / that he hadde weryd o day
 After that tyme / he nolde it neuere see 3664
 Nettes of gold threed / hadde he greet plentee
 To fisshen in Tybre / whan hym liste pleye
 Hise lustes were al lawe / in his decree
 ffor ffortune / as his freend / hym wolde obeye 3668

¶ He Rome brende / for his delicacie
 The Senatours / he slow vp-on a day
 To heere / how þat men wolde wepe & crye
 And slow his brother / and by his suster lay 3672
 His moder he made / in pitous array
 ffor he hire wombe slytte / to biholde
 Where he conceyued was / so weilaway
 That he so litel / of his moder tolde 3676

¶ No teere out of hise eyen / for that sighte
 Ne cam / but seyde / a fair womman was she
 Greet wonder is / how þat he koude / or myghte
 Be domesman / of hire dede beautee 3680
 The wyn to bryngen hym / comanded he
 And drank anoon / noon oother wo he made
 Whan myght^t is ioyned / vn-to crueltee
 Allas to depe / wol the venym wade 3684

[¶] In youthe / a maister hadde this Emperour [leaf 94, back]
 To teche hym lettrure / and curteisye
 ffor of moralitee / he was the flour
 As in his tyme / but if bookes lye 3688
 And whil this maister / hadde of hym maistrye
 He maked hym / so louyng^t and so souple
 That longe tyme it was / er tirannye
 Or any vice / dorste in hym vncouple 3692

¶ This Seneca / of which þat I deuyse
 By cause Nero / hadde of hym swich drede
 ffor he fro vices / wolde hym ay chastise
 Discretly / as by word / and nat by dede 3696
 Sire wolde he seyn / an Emperour moot nede
 Be vertuous / and hate tirannye
 ffor which he in a bath / made hym to blede
 On bothe hise armes / til he moste dye 3700

¶ This Nero / hadde eek / of acustumance
 In youthe / agayns his maister for to rise
 Which afterward / hym thoughte a greet greuance
 Ther-fore / he made hym dyen in this wise 3704
 But nathelees / this Seneca the wise
 Chees / in a bath / to dye in this manere
 Rather than han / another tormentrise
 And thus hath Nero / slayn his maister deere 3708

¶ Now fil it so / that ffortune liste no lenger
 The hye pride of Nero / to cherice
 ffor thogh þat he was strong/ yet was she strenger
 She thoghte thus / by god I am to nyce 3712
 To sette a man / that is fulfild of vice
 In heigh degree / and Emperour hym calle
 By god / out of his sete I wol hym trice
 Whan he leest weneth / sonnest shal he falle 3716

¶ The peple roos / vp on hym / on a nyght
 ffor his defeaute / and whan he it espied
 Out of his dores / anon he hath hym dight
 Allone / and there he wende han been allyed 3720
 He knocked faste / and ay the moore he cryed
 The faster shette they / the dores alle
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he dyed
 And wente his wey / no lenger dorste he calle 3724

¶ The peple cryde / and rombled vp and down [leaf 95]
 That *with* hise erys / herde he / how they seyde
 Where is this false tirant^t this Neroun
 ffor fere almoost^t out of his wit he breyde 3728
 And to hise goddes / pitously he preyde
 ffor socour / but it myghte noght bityde
 ffor drede of this / hym thoughte þat he deyde
 And ran in to a gardyn / hym to hyde 3732

¶ And in this gardyn / foond he cherles tweye
 That seten by a fyr / greet^t and reed
 And to thise cherlis two / he gan to preye
 To sleen hym / and to girden of his heed 3736
 That to his body / whan þat he were deed
 Were no despit ydoon / for his defame
 Hym self he slow / he koude no bettre reed
 Of which / ffortune / lough and hadde a game 3740

[*Holofernes.*]

¶ **W**as neuere Capitayn / vnder a kyng^t / De Oloferno
 That regnes mo / putte in subieccioun
 Ne strenger was in feeld / of alle thyng^t
 As in his tyme / ne gretter of renoun 3744
 Ne moore pompous / in heigh presumpeioun
 Than Oloferne / which ffortune ay kiste
 So likerously / and ladde hym vp and doun
 Til þat his heed was of / er that he wiste 3748

¶ Nat oonly / that this world hadde hym in awe
 ffor lesynge / of richesse / or libertee
 But made euery man / reneyen his lawe
 Nabugodonosor / was god seyde he 3752
 Noon oother god / sholde adoured be
 Agayns this heste / no wight dorste trespace
 Saue in Bethulia / a strong Citee // Et fecerunt filij Israel / secundum
 quod constituerat eis sacerdos dom-
 Where Eliachym / a preest was of that place ^{ini Eliachym}

¶ But tak kepe / of the deeth of Oloferne
 Amydde his oost^t he dronke lay a nyght^t
 With-Inne his tente / large as is a berne
 And yet^t for al his pompe / and al his myght^t 3760
 Iudith a womman / as he lay vpright^t
 Slepynge / his heed of smoot^t and from his tente
 fful pryuely she stal / from euery wight^t
 And with his heed / vn-to hir toun she wente 3764

[*Antiochus.*]

What nedeth it^t of kyng Anthiochus [leaf 95, back]
 To telle / his hye Roial magestee
 His hye pryde / hise werkes venymus
 ffor swich another / was ther noon as he 3768
 Reed which that he was / in Machabee
 And reed / the proude wordes / þat he seyde
 And why he fil / fro heigh prosperitee
 And in an Hille / how wrecchedly he deyde 3772

¶ fortune / hym hadde enchaunted so in pride
 That verrailly / he wende he myghte attayne
 Vn-to the sterres / vp on euery syde
 And in balance / weyen ech montayne 3776
 And alle the floodes / of the see restrayne
 And goddes peple / hadde he moost in hate
 Hem wolde he sleen / in torment^t and in payne
 Wenynge / that god ne myghte / his pryde abate 3780

¶ And for that Nichanore / and Thymothe
 Of Iewes / weren venquysshed myghtily
 Vn-to the Iewes / swich an hate hadde he
 That he bad greithe his Chaar ful hastily 3784
 And swoor / and seyde ful despitously
 Vn-to Ierusalem / he wolde eft soone
 To wreken his Ire / on it ful cruelly
 But of his purpos / he was let ful soone 3788

¶ God for his manace / hym so soore smoot^t
 With invisible wounde / ay incurable
 That in hise guttes / carf it so and boot^t
 That hise peynes / weren inportable 3792
 And *certainly* / the wreche was resonable
 ffor many a mannes guttes / dide he payne
 But from his purpos / cursed and dampnable
 ffor al his smert^t he wolde hym nat restreyne 3796

¶ But bad anon / apparailen his hoost
 And sodeynly / er he was of it war
 God daunted / al his pride / and al his boost^t
 ffor he / so soore fil / out of his char^{laccrault} 3800
 That it hise lymes / and his skyn totar
 So þat / he neither myghte go ne ryde
 But in a chayer / men aboute hym bar
 Al forbrused / bothe bak and syde 3804

¶ The wreche of god / hym smoot so cruelly [leaf 96]
 That thurgh his body / wikked wormes crepte
 And ther with al / he stank so horribly
 That noon / of al his meynce þat hym kepte 3808
 Wheither so he wook / or ellis slepte
 Ne myghte noght for stynk of hym endure
 Is this meschief / he wayled and eek wepte
 And knew god / lord of euery creature 3812

¶ To al his hoost and to hym self also
 fful wlatson / was the stynk of his careyne
 No man / ne myght hym bere to ne fro
 And in this stynk and this horrible peyne 3816
 He starf ful wrecchedly / in a monteyne
 Thus hath this Robbour / and this homycide
 That many a man / made to wepe and pleyne
 Swich gerdon / as bilongeth vn-to pryde 3820

[*Alexander the Great.*]

The Storie of Alisandre / is so commune / De Alexandro
 That euery wight þat hath discreciõ
 Hath herd som-what or al / of his fortune
 This wide world / as in conclusiõ 3824
 He wan by strengthe / or for hys hye renoñ
 They were glad / for pees vn-to hym sende
 The pryde / of man and beast / he leyde adoun
 Where so he cam / vn-to the worldes ende 3828

¶ Compariſon / myghte neuere yet ben maked
 Bitwixe hym / and another Conquerour
 ffor al this world / for drede of hym hath quaked
 He of knyghthod / and of fredom flour 3832
 ffortune hym made / the heir of hire honour
 Saue wyn and wommen / no thyng myghte aswage
 His hye entente / in armes and labour
 So was he ful / of leonyn corage 3836

¶ What prys were it to hym / thogh I yow tolde
 Of Darius / and an hundred thousand mo
 Of kynges / Prynces / Dukes / Erles bolde
 Whiche he conquered / and broghte hem in-to wo 3840
 I seye / as fer / as man may ride or go
 The world was his / what sholde I moore deuyse
 ffor thogh I write / or tolde yow euere mo
 Of his knyghthode / it myghte nat suffise 3844

[T]welf yeer he regned / as seith Machabee [leaf 96, back]
 Philippes sone of Macidoynes / he was
 That first was kyng in Grece the contree
 O worthy / gentil Alisandre allas 3848
 That euere / sholde fallen swich a cas
 Emptoysned / of thyn owene folk thow weere
 Thyn sys / ffortune hath turned in-to Aas
 And for thee / ne weep she neuer a teere 3852

¶ Who shal me yeue teeris / to compleyne
 The deeth / of gentillesse / and of franchise
 That al this world / weldid in his demeyne
 And yet hym thoughte / it myghte nat suffise 3856
 So ful was his corage / of heigh emprise
 Allas / who shal me helpe to endite
 ffalse ffortune / and poyson to despise
 The whiche two / of al this wo I wytte 3860

[*Julius Cesar.*]

By wisdom / manhede / and by greet labour / De Iulio
 ffrom humble bed / to Roial magestee Cesare
 Vp roos / he Iulius the Conquerour
 That wan al the Occident by land and see 3864
 By strengthe of hond / or ellis by tretee
 And vn-to Rome / made hem tributarie
 And sith of Rome / the Emperour was he
 Til that ffortune / weex his Aduersarie 3868

¶ O myghty Cesar / that in Thessalie
 Agayn Pompeus / fader thyn in lawe
 That of thorient hadde al the chiualrie
 As fer / as þat the day bigynneth dawē 3872
 Thow / thurgh thy knyghthod / hast hem take & slawe
 Saue fewe folk þat with Pompeus fledde
 Thurgh which / thow puttest al Thorient in Awe
 Thanke ffortune / that so wel thee spedde 3876

¶ But now a litel while / I wol biwaille
 This Pompeus / this noble gouvernour
 Of Rome / which þat fleigh at this bataille
 I seye / oon of hise men / a fals traitour 3880
 His heed of smoot / to wynnen hym fauour
 Of Iulius / and hym the heed he broghte
 Allas Pompeie / of Thorient conquerour
 That ffortune / vn-to swich a fyn thee broghte 3884

¶ To Rome agayn / repaireth Iulius [leaf 97]
 With his triumphē / lauriat ful hye
 But on a tyme / Brutus Cassius
 That euere hadde / of his heighe estat enuye 3888
 fful pryuely / hath maad conspiracie
 Agayns this Iulius / in subtil wise
 And caste the place / in which he sholde dye
 With Boydekyns / as I shal yow deuyse 3892

¶ This Iulius / to the Capitolie wente
 Vp-on a day / as he was wont to goon
 And in the Capitolie / anon hym hente
 This false Brutus / and hise othere foon 3896
 And stiked hym / with Boydekyns anon
 With many a wounde / and thus they lete hym lye
 But neuere gronte he / at no strook but oon
 Or ellis at two / but if his storie lye 3900

¶ So manly / was this Iulius of herte
 And so wel / louede estatly honestee
 And thogh hise deedly woundes / so sore smerte
 His mantel ouer his hipes / caste he 3904
 ffor no man / sholde seen his pryuetee
 And as he lay / of dyyng in a traunce
 And wiste verrailly that' deed was he
 Of honestee / yet hadde he remembraunce 3908

¶ Lucan. / to thee this storie I recomende
 And to Sweton / and to Valerius also
 That of this storie / writen word & ende
 How that' to thise grete Conquerours two 3912
 ffortune / was first freend / and siththe a foo
 No man ne triste / vp-on hire fauour longe
 But haue hire / in awayt' for euere mo
 Witnesse / on alle thise Conquerours stronge 3916

[Cresus.]

This riche Cresus / whilom kyng of Lyde [Cresus]
 Of which Cresus / Cirus soore hym dradde
 Yet was he caught' amyddes al his pryde
 And to be brent/ men to the fyr hym ladde 3920
 But swich a reyn / down fro the welkne shadde
 That slow the fyr / and made hym to escape
 But to be war / no grace yet he hadde
 Til ffortune / on the galwes made hym gape 3924

[¹Wh]anne he escaped was / he kan nat stente [¹ Rats. If 97, bk]
 ffor to bigynne / a newe werre agayn
 He wende wel / for þat ffortune hym sente
 Swich hape / that he escaped thurgh the rayn 3928
 That of his foos / he myghte nat be slayn
 And eek a sweuene / vp-on a nyght he mette
 Of which / he was so proud / and eek so fayn
 That in vengeance / he al his herte sette 3932

¶ Vp on a tree he was / as þat hym thoughte
 Ther Iuppiter hym wessh / bothe bak and syde
 And Phebus eek / a fair towaille hym broughte
 To drye hym with / and ther-fore wax his pryde 3936
 And to his doghter / that stood hym bisyde
 Which that he knew / in heigh sentence habounde
 And bad hire telle hym / what it signifyfide
 And she his dreem / bigan right thus expounde 3940

¶ The tree quod she / the galwes is to mene
 And Iuppiter / bitokneth snow and reyn
 And Phebus / with his towaille so clene
 Tho been / the sonnes stremes for to seyn 3944
 Thow shalt an hanged be / fader certeyn
 Reyn shal thee wasshe / and sonne shal thee drye
 Thus warned hym / ful plat and ful pleyn
 His doghter / which þat called was Phanye 3948

¶ An hanged was Cresus / the proude kyng
 His Roial trone / myghte hym nat auaille
 Tragedies noon oother manere thyng
 Ne kan in syngyng / crye ne biwaille 3952
 But þat ffortune / alwey wole assaille
 With vnwar strook / the regnes þat been proude
 ffor whan men trusteth hire / thanne wol she faille
 And couere hire brighte face / with a clowde 3956

[These 4 modern instances ought to follow 'Zenobia,' p. 268.]

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

O noble / o worthy Petro / glorie of Spayne De Petro
 Whom ffortune heeld / so heighe in mageste Ispannie
 Wel oghten men / thy pitous deeth complayne
 Out of thy land / thy brother made thee flee 3568
 And after at a sege / by subtiltee
 Thow were bitrayned / and lad vn-to his tente
 Where as he / with his owene hand slow thee
 Succedyng / in thy regne and in thy rente 3572

¶ The feeld of snow / with thegle of blak ther-Inne [leaf 98]

Caught with the lymrod / coloured as the glede [Bertrand du Guesclin.]

He brew this cursednesse / and al this synne

The wikked nest^t was werkere of this nede 3576

Noght Charles Olyuer / þat took ay hede

of trouthe and honour / but of Armorike [Oliver de Mauny of Britanny.]

Genylon Olyuer / corrupt for mede

Broghte this worthy kyng^t in swich a brike 3580

[Peter of Cyprus.]

○ worthy Petro / kyng of Cipre also De Petro de

That Alisaundre wan / by heigh maistrie Cipro

fful many an hethen / wroghtestow ful wo

Of which / thyne owene liges hadde envie 3584

And for no thyng^t but for thy chiualrie

They in thy bed / han slayn thee by the morwe

Thus kan ffortune / hire wheel gouerne and gye

And out of ioye / brynge men to sorwe 3588

[Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.]

○ Of Melan / grete Barnabo Viscounte / De Barnabo /

God of delit^t and scourge of Lumbardye

Why sholde I noght^t thyn Infortune acounte

Sith in estat / thow clombe were so hye 3592

Thy brother sone / that was thy double allye

ffor he thy Nevew was / and sone in lawe

With-Inne his prison / made thee to dye

But why ne how / noot .I. that thow were slawe 3596

[Ugolino, Count of Pisa.]

○ Of the Erl Hugelyn of Pize / the langour / De hugelyn

Ther may no tonge / tellen for pitee Comite de Pize

But litel out of Pize / stant a tour

In which[e] tour / in prison put was he 3600

And with hym been / hise litel children thre

The eldeste scarsly / fyue yeer was of age

Allas ffortune / it was greet crueltee

Swiche briddes / for to putte in swich a cage 3604

¶ Dampned was he / to dyen in that prison
 ffor Roger / which þat bisshope was of Pize
 Hadde on hym maad / a fals suggestiō
 Thurgh which the peple / gan vp on hym rise 3608
 And putten hym to prison / in swich wise
 As ye han herd / and mete and drynke he hadde
 So smal / that wel vnnethe it may suffice
 And ther with al / it was ful poure and badde 3612

[¹A]nd on a day bifel / þat in that hour [¹ *Rats.* leaf 98, back]
 Whan þat his mete / wont was to be broght
 The Gayler / shette the dores of the tour
 He herde it wel / but he spak / right noght 3616
 And in his herte / anon ther fil a thoght
 That they for hunger / wolde doon hym dyen
 Allas quod he / allas þat I was wroght
 Ther with / the teeris fillen from hise eyen 3620

¶ His yonge sone / þat thre yeer was of age
 Vn-to hym seyde / fader / fader / why do ye wepe
 Whanne wol the Gayler / bryngen oure potage
 Is ther no morsel breed / þat ye do kepe 3624
 I am so hungry / that I may nat slepe
 Now wolde god / þat I myghte slepen euere
 Thanne sholde noght hunger / in my wombe crepe
 Ther is no thyng but breed / þat me were leuere 3628

¶ Thus day by day / this child bigan to crye
 Til in his fadres barm / adoun it lay
 And seyde / farewel fader / I moot dye
 And kiste his fader / and deyde the same day 3632
 And whan the woful fader / deed it say
 ffor wo / hise armes two / he gan to byte
 And seyde / allas ffortune and weylaway
 Thy false wheele / my wo al may I wyte 3636

¶ Hise children wende / that it for hunger was
 That he hise armes gnow / and nat for wo
 And seyden fader / do nat so allas
 But rather / ete the flessch vp-on vs two 3610
 Oure flessch thow yaf taak oure flessch vs fro
 And ete ynow / right thus they to hym seyde
 And after that with-Inne a day / or two
 They leyde hem / in his lappe adoun / and deyde 3644

¶ Hym self despeired / eek/ for hunger starf
 Thus ended is / this myghty Erl of Pize
 ffrom heigh estat. ffortune away hym carf
 Of this tragedie / it oghte ynogh suffise 3648
 Who so wole it heere it in a lenger wise
 Redeth / the grete Poete of Ytaille
 That highte Dant. for he kan al deuyse
 ffrom point to point nat o word wol he faille 3652

Here is ended the Monkes tale

¶ This is the Prologe / of the Nonne Prees [tes¹] ^[leaf 99] tale.
^[1 Rats.]

HO quod the knyght^t good sire namoore of this
 That ye han seyde / is right ynow ywis
 And muchel moore / for litel heynessee
 Is right ynow / to muche folk I gesse ^[no gap in Hengwrt] 3960
 [I seye for me hit is a grete disese ^[MS Reg. 18 C ii, leaf 226]
 where as men han ben in grete welþe & ese
 To heren of her sodeyn fal allas
 And þe contrarie is ioye and grete solace 3964
 As whan a man haþ be in pore estate
 And clymbeth vp and wexeth fortunate
 [And ther/ a-bideth in prosperite.] ^[Harl. 1758, lf 192, bk]
 Suche þing is gladsom as hit þinketh me 3968
 And þough suche þing were goodly forto telle
 3e quod oure Oste by seynt poules belle
 3e seie right soth þis monk^t he clappeth loude
 He spak^t how fortune couered in a cloude 3972
 I not neuere what & also of a treiadie
 Right now 3e herde and parde no remedie
 It is for to be-wayle ne complayne
 That that is doon and also hit is a payne 3976
 As 3e han saide to here of heynessee
 Sire monk^t nomore of þis so god 3ou blesse
 3oure tale annoyeth aþ þis companye
 Suche talkyng^t nys not worth a butterflye] ^[MS Reg. ex-tract ends]
 Youre tales / doon vs no desport ne game
 Wherfore sire Monk/ o. daun Piers by youre name
 I prey yow hertely / telle vs som what ellis
 ffor sikerly / nere clynkyng of youre bellis 3984

That on youre bridel hange / on euery syde
 By heuene kyng^t þat for vs alle dyde
 I sholde er this / haue fallen doun for sleepe
 Al thogh the slow / hadde neuere ben so deepe 3988
 Thanne hadde youre tale / al be toold in veyn
 ffor certeynly / as þat thise clerkes seyn
 Where as a man / may haue noon audience
 Naught helpeth it to tellen his sentence 3992
 And wel I woot the substañce is in me
 If any thyng^t shal wel reported be
 Sire / sey som what of huntyng^t I yow preye
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk^t I haue no lust to pleye 3996
 Now lat another telle / as I haue toold
 ¶ Thanne spak oure hoost^t with rude speche & boold
 And seyde / vn-to the Nonnes preest anon
 Com neer thow preest^t com hider thow s^r Iohn 4000
 Telle vs swich thyng^t as may oure hertes glade
 Be blythe / though thow ryde vp-on a Iade
 What^t though thyn hors / be bothe foul and lene
 If he wol serue thee / rekke nat a bene 4004
 Looke / that thyn herte / be murye euere mo
 ¶ Yis sire quod he / yis hoost so mote I go
 But I be murye / ywis I wol be blamed
 And right anon / his tale he hath attamed 4008
 And thus he seyde / vn-to vs euerichon
 This sweete preest^t this goodly man s^r Iohn

Explicit 𐄂

¶ Here bigynneth the Nonnes preestes tale of the Cok/
and Hen / Chauntecler & Pertelote / [leaf 99, back]

A poore widwe / som del stape in age
was whilom dwellynge / in a narwe cotage 4012
Beside a groue / stondyng in a dale
This widwe / of which I telle yow my tale
Syn thilke day / þat she was last a wyf
In pacience / ladde a ful symple lyf 4016
ffor / litel was hire catel and hire rente
By housbondrye / of swich as god hire sente
She foond hire self / and eek hire doghtren two
Thre large sowes / hadde she and namo 4020
Thre kyn / and eek a sheepe / þat highte Malle
fful sooty was hire bour / and eek hire halle
In which she eet ful many a sklendre meel
Of poynañt sawce / hir neded neuer a deel 4024
No deyntee morsel / passed thurgh hir throte
Hir diete / was acordant to hir cote
Repleccioñ / ne made hire neuere syk
Attempree diete / was al hire phisyk 4028
And excercise / and hertes suffisaunce
The gowte / lette hire no thyng for to daunce
Napoplexie / shente nat hire heed
No wyn ne drank she / neither whit ne reed 4032
Hire bord was serued / moost *with* whit and blak
Milk and broun breed / in which she foond no lak
Seynd bacon / and som tyme an Ey / or tweye
ffor she was / as it were / a maner deye 4036
A yeerd she hadde / enclosed al aboute
With stikkes / and a drye dych *with*-oute
In which / she hadde a cok / heet Chauntecler
In al the land / of crowyng nas his peer 4040

His voys was murier / than the myrie Orgon
 On massedayes / þat in the chirche gon
 Wel sikerer / was his crowyng in his logge
 Than is a Clokke / or any Abbey Orlogge 4044
 By nature / he knew ech ascencioñ
 Of equinoxial / in thilke town
 ffor whan degrees .xv. / were ascended [leaf 100]
 Thanne krew he / þat it myghte nat ben amended 4048
 His komb / was redder / than the fyn coral
 And batayled / as it were a Castel wal
 His byle was blak and as the Ieet' it shoon
 Lyk Asure / were hise legges and his toon 4052
 Hise nayles whitter / than the lylve flour
 And lyk the burned gold / was his colour
 This gentil cok / hadde in his gouernaunce
 Seuene hennes / for to doon al his plesaunce 4056
 Whiche were hise sustres / and his paramours
 And wonder lyke to hym / as of colours
 Of whiche / the faireste hewed on hire throte
 Was clepid / faire damoysele Pertelote 4060
 Curteys she was / discret / and debonaire
 And compaignable / and bar hir self so faire
 Syn thilke day / þat she was seuen nyght oold
 That trewely / she hath the herte in hoold 4064
 Of Chauntecler / loken in euery lyth
 He loued hire so / þat wel was hym ther with
 But swich a ioye was it to here hem synge
 Whan þat / the brighte sonne gan to sprynge 4068
 In swete acord / my leef / is faren in londe
 ffor thilke tyme / as I haue vnderstonde
 Beestes / and briddes / kouden speke and synge
 And so bifel / þat in a dawenyng 4072
 As Chauntecler / among hise wyues alle
 Sat on his perche / that was in the halle
 And next hym sat this faire Pertelote
 This Chauntecler / gan gronen in his throte 4076

As man / þat in his dreem / is drecched soore
 ¶ And whan þat Pertelote / thus herde hym rore
 She was agast/ and seyde herte deere
 What eyleth yow · to grone in this manere 4080
 Ye ben a verray slepere / fy for shame
 ¶ And he answerde / and seyde thus / madame
 I prey yow / þat ye take it nat agrief^t
 By god me mette / I was in swich meschief^t 4084
 Right now / þat yet myn herte is soore afright^t
 Now god quod he / my sweuene recche aright^t
¹[A]nd kepe my body / out of foul prisoun [^t *Rats.* leaf 100, bk]
 Me mette / how that I romed vp and doun 4088
 With-Inne oure yeerd / where as I say a beest^t
 Was lyk an hound / and wolde han maad arest^t
 Vp-on my body / and han had me ded
 His colour / was bitwixe yelow and red 4092
 And tipped was his tayl / and bothe hise erys
 With blak^t vnlik the remenañt of hise herys
 His snowte smal / *with* glowyng eyen tweye
 Yet of his look^t for fere almoost I deye 4096
 This caused me / my gronyng doutelees
 ¶ Avoy quod she / fy on yow hertelees
 Allas quod she / for by that god aboue
 Now han ye lost^t myn herte and al my loue 4100
 I kan nat loue a Coward / by my feith
 ffor certes / what so any womman seith
 We alle desiren / if it myghte be
 To han housbondes / hardy / wise and fre 4104
 And secree / and no nygard / ne no fool
 Ne hym / þat is agast of euery tool
 Ne noon auauntour / by that god aboue
 How dorste ye seyn / for shame / vn-to youre loue 4108
 That any thyng^t myghte make yow aferd
 Haue ye no mannes herte / and han a berd
 Allas / and konne ye ben agast of sweuenys
 No thyng god woot^t but vanytee in sweuene is 4112

Sweuenes / engendren of replexions
 And ofte / of fume / and of complexions
 Whan humours / ben to habundant in a wight
 Certes this dreem / which ye han met to nyght 4116
 Comth / of the grete superfluitee
 Of youre rede Colera pardee
 Which causeth folk / to dreden in hir dremes
 Of Arwes / and of fyr *with* rede lemes 4120
 Of rede bestes / that they wol hem byte
 Of kontek^t and of whelpes grete and lyte
 Right^t as the humour / of Malencolie
 Causeth ful many a man / in sleepe to crie 4124
 ffor fere of blake beres / or boles blake
 Or ellis / blake deueles wol hem take
 Of othere humours / koude I telle also [leaf 101]
 That werken many a man / in sleep ful wo 4128
 But I wol passe / as lightly as I kan
 Lo Catoñ which *pat* was so wys a man
 Seyde he nat thus / ne do no fors of dremes
 Now sire quod she / whan we fle fro thise bemes 4132
 ffor goddes loue / as taak som laxatif
 Vp *peril* of my soule / and of my lif
 I conseile yow the beste / I wol nat lye
 That bothe of Colere / and of Malencolye 4136
 Ye purge yow / and for ye shal nat tarye
 Thogh / in this town / is noon Apothecarye
 I shal my self / to herbes techen yow
 That shul ben / for youre heele and for youre prow 4140
 And in oure yerd / tho herbes shal I fynde
 The whiche han / of hire *propretee* by kynde
 To purge yow / bynethe and eek^t aboue
 ffor yet nat this / for goddes owene loue 4144
 Ye ben ful colerik^t of complexioñ
 Ware the sonne / in his Ascencioñ
 Ne fynde yow nat replet^t of humours hote
 And if it do / I dar wel leye a grote 4148

That ye shul haue / a feuere terciane
 Or an Agew / þat may be youre bane
 A day / or two / ye shul han degestyues
 Of wormes / er ye take youre laxatyues 4152
 Of Lauriol / Centaure and ffumetere
 Or ellis of Ellebor / that groweth there
 Of Katapuce / or of Gaytrys beryis
 Of herbe yue growyng in oure yerd / they merye is 4156
 Pekke hem vp right as ther growe / and ete hem In
 Be myrie housbonde / for youre fader kyn
 Dredeth no dreem / I kan sey yow namoore
 ¶ Madame quod he / grant mercy of youre loore 4160
 But nathelees / as touchyng^t dann Catoun
 That hath of wisdom / swich a gret renoun
 Thogh þat he bad / no dremes for to drede
 By god men may / in olde bokes rede 4164
 Of many a man / moore of auctoritee
 Than euere Caton was / so mote I thee
¹[T]hat al the reuers seyn / of his sentence [¹ *Rats.* leaf 101, bk]
 And han wel founden / by experience 4168
 That dremes / ben signyficaciōis
 As wel / of ioie / as tribulaciōis
 That folk enduren / in this lyf present^t
 Ther nedeth / make of this noon argument^t 4172
 The verray preue / sheweth it in dede
 ¶ Oon of the gretteste Auctour / þat men rede
 Seith thus / þat whilom two felawes wente
 On pilgrymage / in a ful good entente 4176
 And happed so / they coomen in a town
 Where as ther was / swich congregacioun
 Of peple / and eek^t so streit of herbergage
 That they ne founde / as muche as o cotage 4180
 In which they bothe / myghte ylogged be
 Wherfore / they mosten of necessitee
 As for that nyght^t departe compaignye
 And ech of hem / gooth to his hostelrye 4184

And took his loggyng^t as it wolde falle
 That oon of hem / was logged in a stalle
 ffer in a yeerd / with oxen of the plow
 That oother man / was logged wel ynow 4188
 As was his auenture / or his fortune
 That vs *gouerneth* alle / as in *commune*
 And so bifel / *þat* longe / er it were day
 This man mette in his bed / ther as he lay 4192
 How *þat* his felawe / gan vp-on hym calle
 And seyde allas / for in an Oxes stalle
 This nyght I shal be mordred ther I lye
 Now help me deere brother / or I dye 4196
 In alle haste / com to me / he sayde
 ¶ This man / out of his sleepe / for feere abrayde
 But whan *þat* he was wakned / of his sleep
 He turned hym / and took of this no keepe 4200
 Hym thoughte / his dreem nas but a vanytee
 Thus twies / in his slepyng dremed he
 And atte thridde tyme / yet his felawe
 Cam as hym thoughte / and seyde I am now slawe 4204
 Bihoold my bloody woundes / depe and wyde
 Arys vp erly / in the morwe tyde
 And atte Westgate of the town quod he [leaf 102]
 A Carte ful of donge / ther shaltow se 4208
 In which / my body is hyd ful priuely
 Do thilke Cart^t aresten boldely
 My gold caused my mordre / sooth to seyn
 And tolde hym euery poynt^t how he was sleyn 4212
 With a ful pitous face / pale of hewe
 And truste wel / his dreem he fond ful trewe
 ffor on the morwe / as soone as it was day
 To his felawes In / he took the way 4216
 And whan *þat* he cam / to this Oxes stalle
 After his felawe / he bigan to calle
 ¶ The hostiler / answerde hym anon
 And seyde / sire / youre felawe is agon 4220

As soone as day / he wente out of the town
 ¶ This man / gan fallen in suspecioun
 Remembrynge / on hise dremes þat he mette
 And forth he goth / no lenger wolde he lette 4224
 Vn-to the westgate of the town / and fond
 A dong Carte / went as it were to donge lond
 That was arrayed / in that same wise
 As ye han herd / the dede man deuyse 4228
 And with an hardy herte / he gan to crye
 Vengeaunce / and Iustice / of this felonye
 My felawe / mordred is / this same nyght
 And in this Cart heere / he lyth gapyng vp-right 4232
 I crye / on the Mynystres / quod he
 That sholde kepe / and rulen this Citee
 Harrow / allas / heere lyth my felawe slayn
 What sholde I moore / vn-to this tale sayn 4236
 The peple vp sterte / and caste the Cart to grounde
 And in the myddel of the dong^t they founde
 The dede man / þat mordred was al newe
 ¶ O blisful god / þat art so Iust and trewe 4240
 Lo / how þat thow biwreyst^t mordre alway
 Mordre wol out^t that se we day by day
 Mordre / is so wlatson / and abhomynable
 To god / that is so Iust and resonable 4244
 That he ne wod nat suffre it helyd be
 Though it abyde / a yeer / or two / or thre
¹[M]ordre wol out^t this my conclusioun [¹ *Rats.* leaf 102, back]
 And right anon / Ministres of that town 4248
 Han hent the Cartere / and so soore hym pyned
 And eek^t the hostiler / so sore engyned
 That they biknewe / hire wikkednesse anon
 And were anhangd / by the nekke bon 4252
 Heere may men sen / þat dremes ben to drede
 ¶ And certes / in the same book I rede
 Right^t in the nexte Chapitre / after this
 I gabbe nat^t so haue I ioie or blys 4256

Two men / þat wolde han passed ouer see
 ffor certeyn cause / in-to a fer contree
 If þat the wynd / ne hadde ben contrarie
 That made hem / in a Citee for to tarie 4260
 That stood ful myrie / vp on an hauen syde
 But on a day / agayn the euen tyde
 The wynd gan chaunge / and blew right as hem leste
 Iolif and glad / they wenten vn-to reste 4264
 And casten hem / ful erly for to sayle
 But herkneth / to that o man / fil a gret meruaille
 ¶ That oon of hem / in slepyng^t as he lay
 Hym mette a wonder dreem / agayn the day 4268
 Hym thoughte / a man stood / by his beddes syde
 And hym comanded / þat he sholde abyde
 And seyde hym thus / if thow tomorwe wende
 Thow shalt be dreynt^t my tale is at an ende 4272
 ¶ He wook / and tolde his felawe what he mette
 And preyde hym / his viage to lette
 As for that day / he preyde hym to byde
 ¶ His felawe / þat lay / by his beddes syde 4276
 Gan for to laughe / and scorned hym ful faste
 No dreem quod he / may so myn herte agaste
 That I wol lette / for to do my thynges
 I sette nat a straw / by thy dremynges 4280
 ffor sweuenes ben / but vanytees and Iapes
 Men dreme al day / of Owles / or of Apes
 And of many a maze / ther with al
 Men dreme of thyng^t þat neuere was ne shal 4284
 But sith I see / þat thow wolt here abyde
 And thus forslawthen / wilfully thy tyde
 God woot it reweth me / and haue good day [leaf 103]
 And thus / he took his leue / and wente his way 4288
 But er þat he / hadde half his cours yseyled
 Noot I nat why / ne what meschaunce it eyled
 But casuelly / the shippes botme rente
 And shipe and man / vnder the water wente 4292

In sighte of othere shippes / it bisyde
 That *with* hem seyled / at the same tyde
 And therfore / faire Pertelote so deere
 By swiche ensamples olde / maystow leere 4296
 That no man / sholde ben to recchelees
 Of dremes / for I sey thee doutelees
 That many a dreem / ful soore is for to drede
 ¶ Lo / in the lyf of Seint Kenelm I rede 4300
 That was Kenulphus sone / the noble Kyng^t
 Of Mertenrike / how Kenelm mette a thyng^t
 Alite / er he was mordred / on a day
 His mordre / in his auysion he say 4304
 His norice / hym expowned euery del
 His sweuene / and bad hym for to kepe hym wel
 ffor traysoñ / but he nas but .vij. yeer old
 And therfore / litel tale hath he told 4308
 Of any dreem / so holy was his herte
 By god / I hadde leuere than my sherte
 That ye hadde rad his legende / as haue I
 Dame Pertelote / I sey yow trewely 4312
 Macrobeus / that writ the Auysion
 In Affrike / of the worthy Cipioñ
 Affermeth dremes / and seith þat they ben
 Warnynge of thynges / þat men after sen 4316
 ¶ And forther moore / I pray yow looketh wel
 In the olde testament^t of Danyel
 If he heeld dremes / any vanytee
 ¶ Rede eek of Ioseph / and there shul ye see 4320
 Wher dremes be som tyme / I sey nat alle
 Warnynge of thynges / þat shul after falle
 ¶ Looke of Egipte / the Kyng Daun Pharao
 His bakere / and his butiller also 4324
 Wher they ne felte / noon effect in dremes
 Who so wol seke / Actes of sondry Remes
¹[M]ay rede of dremes / many a wonder thyng^t [^t *Rats.* 1f163, bk]
 ¶ Lo Cresus / which þat was of Lyde kyng^t 4328

Mette he nat þat he sat vp-on a tree
 Which signyfide / he sholde an hanged be
 ¶ Lo here Andromacha / Ectores wyf
 That day that Ector / sholde lese his lyf 4332
 She dremed / on the same nyght biforn
 How þat the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn
 If thilke day / he wente in-to bataille
 She warned hym / but it myghte nat auaille 4336
 He wente for to fighte / nathelees
 And he was slayn anon / of Achilles
 But thilke tale / is al to long to telle
 And eek / it is ney day / I may nat dwelle 4340
 Shortly I seye / as for conclusiō
 That I shal han / of this auyssiō
 Aduersitee / and I seye forther moor
 That I ne telle / of laxatyues no stoor 4344
 ffor they ben venymes / I woot it wel
 I hem deffie / I loue hem neuer a del
 ¶ Now lat vs speke of myrthe and stynte al this
 Madame Pertelote / so haue I blys 4348
 Of o thyng god hath sent me large grace
 ffor whan I se / the beautee / of youre face
 Ye ben so scarlet reed / aboute youre eyen
 It maketh / al my drede for to deyen 4352
 ffor also siker / as In principio
 Mulier / est hominis confusio
 Madame / the sentence / of this latyn is
 Womman / is mannes ioye and al his blys 4356
 ffor whan I feele a nyght youre softe syde
 Al be it þat I may nat on yow ryde
 ffor þat oure perche / is maad so narwe allas
 I am so ful / of Ioye and of solas 4360
 That I deffie / bothe sweuene and dreem
 And with that word / he fley down fro the beam
 ffor it was day / and eke hise hennes alle
 And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle 4364

ffor he hadde founde a corn / lay in the yerd
 Real he was / he was namoore aferd
 He fethered Pertelote / twenty tyme [leaf 104]
 And trad as ofte / er it was pryme 4368
 He looketh / as it were a grym leoun
 And on hise toos / he rometh vp and down
 Hym deynd nat/ to sette his foot to grounde
 And chukketh / whan he hath a corn yfounde 4372
 And to hym rennen thanne / hise wyues alle
 Thus real / as a Prince is in his halle
 Leue I this Chauntecler / in his pasture
 And after / wol I telle his auenture 4376
 ¶ Whan that the Monthe / in which the world bigan
 That highte March / whan god first maked man
 Was complet and passed were also
 Syn March bigan / 30. dayes and two ~ 4380
 Bifel / þat Chauntecler / in al his pryde
 Hise seuene wyues / walkyng him bisyde
 Caste vp hise eyen / to the brighte sonne
 That in the signe of Taurus / hadde yronne 4384
 xx. degrees and oon / and som what moore
 And knew by kynde / and by noon oother loore
 That it was pryme / and krew *with* blisful steuene
 The sonne he seyde / is clomben vp on heuene 4388
 40. degrees and oon / and moore ywis
 Madame Pertelote / my worldes blys
 Herkneth thyse blisful bryddes / how they synge
 And se the fresshe floures / how they sprynge 4392
 fful is myn herte / of reuel and solas
 But sodeynly / hym fil a sorweful cas
 ffor euere the latter ende of ioye / is wo
 God woot þat worldly ioye / is soone ago 4396
 And if a Rethor / koude faire endite
 He in a Cronycle / sauffy myghte it write
 As for a souereyn notabilitee Petrus Comestor
 Now euery wys man / lat hym herkne me 4400

This storie / is also trewe I vndertake
 As is the book/ of Launcelot de Lake
 That wommen holde / in ful gret reuerence
 Now wol I / torne agayn to my sentence 4404
 ¶ A Colfox / ful of sley Iniquitee
 That in the groue / hadde woned yeres thre
¹[By] heigh ymaginaciō / forncast^t [1 *Rats.* leaf 104, back]
 The same nyght^t thurgh-out the hegges brast^t 4408
 In-to the yerd / ther Chauntecler the faire
 Was wont^t and eek hise wyues to repaire
 And in a bed of wortes / stille he lay
 Til it was passed / vndren of the day 4412
 Waitynge his tyme / on Chauntecler to falle
 As gladly doon / thise homycides alle
 That in awayt liggen / to mordre men
 O false mordreour / lurkyng in thy den 4416
 O newe Scariot^t newe Genylon
 ffalse dissimilour / o greek Synoñ
 That broghtest Troye / al outrely to sorwe
 O Chauntecler / acursed be that morwe 4420
 That thow in-to the yerd / flaugh fro the bemys
 Thow were / ful wel y-warned by thy dremys
 That thilke day / was perilous to thee
 But what þat god forwoot^t moot nedes be 4424
 After the opynyōñ of certeyn clerkis
 Witnesse on hym / þat any parfit clerk is
 That in scole / is gret altercaciōñ
 In this matere / and gret disputisiōñ 4428
 And hath ben / of an hundred thousand men
 But I ne kan / nat bulte it to the bren
 As kan / the holy doctour Augustyn
 Or Boece / or the Bisshope Bradwardyn 4432
 Wheither / þat goddes worthy forewityng^t
 Streyneth me nedely / for to doon a thyng/
 Nedely clepe I / symple necessitee
 Or ellis / if fre choys / be graunted me 4436

To do that same thyng^t or do it noght^t
 Though god forwoot^t it/ er þat I was wroght^t
 Or if his wityng^t streyneth neuer a del
 But^t by necessitee / condicionel 4440
 I wol nat han to do / of swich matere
 My tale is of a Cok^t as ye may heere
 That took his conseil / of his wyf/ *with* sorwe
 To walken in the yerd / vp-on that morwe 4444
 That he hadde met the dreem / þat I yow tolde
 Wommens conseils / be ful ofte colde
 Wommannes conseil / broghte vs first to wo [leaf 105]
 And made Adam / fro Paradys to go 4448
 Ther as he was / ful myrie and wel at ese
 But for I noot^t to whom it myghte displese
 If I conseil of wommen / wolde blame
 Passe ouer / for I seyde it in my game 4452
 Rede Auctours / where they trete of swich matere
 And what they seyn of wommen heere
 Thise ben the Cokkes wordes and nat myne
 I kan noon harm / on no womman deuyne 4456
 ¶ ffaire in the Sond / to bathe hire myrily
 Lyth Pertelote / and alle hire sustres by
 Agayn the sonne / and Chauntecler so free
 Song myrier / than the Mermayde in the see 4460
 ffor Phisiologus / seith sikerly
 How þat they syngen / wel and myrily
 ¶ And so bifel / that as he caste his eye
 Among the wortes / on a Boterflye 4464
 He was war of this fox / þat lay ful lowe
 No thyng^t ne liste hym thanne for to crowe
 But cryde anon / cok^t cok^t and vp he sterte
 As man / þat was affrayd in his herte 4468
 ffor naturelly / a beest desireth flee
 ffro his contrarie / if he may it see
 Though he neuere erst^t hadde seye it *with* his eye
 This Chauntecler / whan he gan hym espye 4472

He wolde han fled / but þat the fox anon
 Seyde gentil sire / allas wher wol ye gon
 Be ye affrayd / of me þat am youre freend
 Now certes / I were worse than a feend 4476
 If I to yow / wolde harm / or vileynye
 I am nat come / youre conseil for tespye
 But trewely / the cause of my comynge
 Was oonly / for to herkne how þat ye synge 4480
 ffor trewely / ye han as myrie a steuene
 As any Angel hath / þat is in heuene
 Ther with / ye han in Musyk' moore feelynge
 Than hadde Boece / or any þat kan synge 4484
 My lord youre fader / god his soule blesse
 And eek youre moder / of hire gentillesse
¹[Ha]n in myn hous yben / to my gret ese [¹ *Rats.* leaf 105, back]
 And certes sire / ful fayn wolde I yow plese 4488
 ¶ But for men speke of syngynge / I wol seye
 So mote I browke wel / myne eyen tweye
 Saue ye / I herde neuere man so synge
 As dide youre fader / in the morwenynge 4492
 Certes / it was of herte / al that he song'
 And for to make his voys / the moore strong'
 He wolde so peyne hym / þat with bothe hise eyen
 He moste wynke / so loude he wolde cryen 4496
 And stonden on his typton / ther with al
 And strecche forth his nekke / long and smal
 And eek / he was of swich discrecioñ
 That ther nas no man / in no Regioñ 4500
 That hym in song / or wisdom myghte passe
 I haue wel rad / in daun Burnelle the Asse
 Among hise vers / how þat ther was a cok'
 ffor a preestes sone / yaf hym a knok' 4504
 Vp-on his leg' whil he was yong and nyce
 He made hym / for to lese his benefice
 But certeyn / ther nys no comparisoñ
 Bitwix the wisdom / and discrecioñ 4508

Of youre fader / and of his subtiltee
 Now syngeth sire / for seynte charitee
 Lat se / konne ye youre fader countrefete
 ¶ This Chauntecler / hise wynges gan to bete 4512
 As man þat koude / his trayson nat espie
 So was he rauysshed / with his flaterie
 ¶ Allas ye lordes / many a fals flatour
 Is in youre court and many a losengeour 4516
 That plesen yow wel moore / by my feyth
 Than he / þat soothfastnesse vn-to yow seith
 Redeth Ecclesiaste / of flaterye
 Beth war ye lordes / of hir trecherye 4520
 ¶ This Chauntecler / stood hye vp on his toos
 Strecchyng his nekke / and heeld hise eyen cloos
 And gan to crowe / lowde for the nones
 And daun Russelle the fox / stirte vp atones 4524
 And by the gargat hente Chauntecler
 And on his bak / toward the wode hym beer
 ffor yet ne was ther no man / þat hym sewed [leaf 106]
 ¶ O destynnee / þat mayst nat ben eschewed 4528
 Allas þat Chauntecler / fly fro the bemes
 Allas / his wif / ne roghte nat of dremes
 And on a friday / fil al this meschañce
 ¶ O Venus / þat art goddesse of plesañce 4532
 Syn þat thy seruant was this Chauntecler
 And in thy seruyce / dide al his power
 Moore for delit than world to multiplie
 Why woldestow suffre hym / on thy day to dye 4536
 ¶ O Gaufred / deere maister souerayn
 That whan / thy worthy kyng Richard was slayn
 With shot compleynedest his deth so soore
 Why ne hadde I now / thy sentence and thy loore 4540
 The friday for to chide / as diden ye
 ffor on a ffriday / soothly slayn was he
 Thanne wolde I shewe yow / how þat I kowde pleyne
 ffor Chaunteclerys drede / and for his peyne 4544

¶ Certes / swich cry / ne lamentaciō
 Was neuere of ladyes maad / whan yliō
 Was wonne / and Pirrus / with his streite swerd
 Whanne he hadde hent kyng Priam by the berd 4548
 And slayn hym / as seith vs Eneydos
 As maden / alle the hennes in the cloos
 Whan they hadde seyn / of Chauntecler the sighte
 But souereynly / dame Pertelote shrighte 4552
 fful louder / than dide Hasdrubales wyf
 Whan þat hire housbonde / hadde ylost his lyf
 And þat the Romayns / hadden brend Cartage
 She was / so ful of torment and of rage 4556
 That wilfully / vn-to the fyr she sterte
 And brende hir seluen / with a stedefast herte
 ¶ O woful hennes / right so cryden ye
 As / whan þat Nero / brende the Citee 4560
 Of Rome / cryden the senatours wyues
 ffor þat hir housbondes / losten alle hire lyues
 With-oute gilt this Nero hath hem slayn
 Now wol I turne / to my tale agayn 4564
 ¶ The sely widwe / and eek hire doghtres two
 Herden thise hennes crye / and maken wo
¹[And] out at dores / stirten they anon [¹Rats. leaf 106, back]
¹[A]nd seyen the fox / toward the groue gon 4568
 And bar vp-on his bak / the cok / away
 And criden / out harrow and weilaway
 Ha / ha. the fox / and after hym they ran
 And eek with staues / many another man 4572
 Ran Colle oure dogge / and Talbot and Gerlande
 And Malkyn / with a distaf in hire hande
 Ran Cow and calf / and eek the verray hogges
 So fered / for berkyng of the dogges 4576
 And showtyng of the men / and wommen eek
 They ronne so / hem thoughte hire herte brek
 They yelleden / as fendes doon in helle
 The dokes cryden / as men wolde hem quelle 4580

The gees for feere / flowen ouer the trees
 Out of the hyue / cam the swarm of bees
 So hydous was the noyse / a benedicite
 Certes / he Iakke Straw / and his meynce 4584
 Ne made neuere showtes / half so shrille
 Whan þat they wolden / any flemyng kille
 As thilke day / was maad vp-on the fox
 Of bras / they broghten bemys / and of box 4588
 Of horn / of boon / in whiche they blewe and powped
 And ther with al / they skryked and they howped
 It semed / as þat heuene sholde falle
 Now goode men / I prey yow herkneth alle 4592
 Lo / how ffortune / turneth sodeynly
 The hope / and pryde eek of hire enemy
 This cok þat lay vp-on the foxes bak
 In al his drede / vn-to the fox he spak 4596
 And seyde sire / if þat I were as ye
 Yit sholde I seyn / as wys god helpe me
 Turneth ayein ye proude cherles alle
 A verray pestilence / vp-on yow falle 4600
 Now I am come / vn-to this wodes syde
 Maugree youre heed / the cok shal here abyde
 I wol hym ete in feith / and that anon
 ¶ The fox answerde / in feith it shal be don 4604
 And [as] he spak that word / al sodeynly
 This cok / brak from his mouth delyuerly
 And hye vp on a tree / he fley anon [leaf 107]
 ¶ And whan the fox say / þat he was gon 4608
 Allas quod he / o Chauntecler Allas
 I haue to yow quod he / ydon trespas
 In as muche / as I maked yow aferd
 Whan I yow hente / and broghte in-to this yerd 4612
 But sire / I dide it in no wikke entente
 Com down / and I shal telle yow what I mente
 I shal seye sooth to yow / god help me so
 ¶ Nay thanne quod he / I shrewe vs bothe two 4616

And first I shrewe my self / bothe blood and bones
 If thou bigile me / any ofter than ones
 Thou shalt namoore / thurgh thy flaterye
 Do me to synge / and wynken *with* myn eye 4620
 ffor he þat wynketh / whan he sholde see
 Al wilfully / god lat hym neuere thee
 ¶ Nay quod the fox / but god yeue hym meschañce
 That is / so vndiscret / of gouernañce 4624
 That Iangleth / whan he sholde holde his pees
 ¶ Lo swich it is / for to be recchelees
 And necligent and truste on flaterye
 But ye / þat holden this tale a folye 4628
 As of a fox / or of a cok and hen
 Taketh the moralitee / goode men
 ffor Seint Poul seith / þat al that writen is
 To oure doctryne / it is ywrite ywis 4632
 Taketh the fruyt and lat the chaf be stille
 Now goode god / if þat it be thy wille
 As seith my lord / so make vs alle goode men
 And brynge vs / to his heye blisse Amen *Dominus Archie-
piscopus Cantu-
ariensis*

¶ Here is ended / the Nonnes Preestes tale 

[The Manciple's Prologue follows in the MS.]

GROUP H. FRAGMENT IX.

§ 1. THE MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

[on leaf 107]

¶ And here folweth the Prologe of the Manciples tale /

Woot ye nat where / ther stant a litel town
 Which þat cleped is / Bobbe vp and down
 Vnder the Blee / in Caunterbury weye
 Ther gan oure hoost for to iape and pleye 4
 And seyde sires / what / Don is in the Myre
 Is ther no man / for preyere ne for Hyre
 [Th]at wole awake / oure felawe al bihynde [¹ Rats. If 108, bk]
 A theef myghte hym / ful lightly robbe and bynde 8
 Se how he nappeth / se how for Cokkes bones
 That he wol falle / from his hors atones
 Is that a Cook of london / with meschaunce
 Do hym come forth / he knoweth his penaunce 12
 ffor he shal telle a tale / by my fey
 Al thogh / it be nat worth a botel hey
 Awake thow Cook quod he / god yeue thee sorwe
 What eyleth thee / to slepe by the morwe 16
 Hastow had teen al nyght or artow dronke
 Or hastow with som quene / al nyght yswonke
 So / that thow mayst nat holden vp thyn heed
 ¶ This Cook / þat was ful pale / and no thyng rede 20
 Seyde to oure hoost / so god my soule blesse
 As ther is / falle / on me swich heuynesse
 Noot I nat why / þat me were leuere slepe
 Than the beste galoñ wyn in Chepe 24

¶ Wel quod the Manciple / if it may don ese 25
 To thee *sir* Cook/ and to no wight displese
 Which þat here rideth / in this compaignye
 And þat oure hoost/ wole of his curteisye 28
 I wole as now / excuse thee of thy tale
 ffor in good feith / thy visage is ful pale
 Thyne eyen daswen eek/ as þat me thynketh
 And wel I woot^t thy breth ful soure stynketh 32
 That sheweth wel / thow art nat wel disposed
 Of me certeyn / thow shalt nat ben yglosed
 Se how he ganeth / lo this dronken wight
 As though he wolde / swolwe vs anon right^t 36
 Hoold cloos thy mouth / man by thy fader kyn
 The deuel of helle / sette his foot ther yn
 Thy cursed breeth / infecte wol vs alle
 ffy stynkyng swyn / fy / foule mote thee falle 40
 A taketh hede sires / of this lusty man
 Now swete sire / wol ye Iusten atte ffan
 Ther-to me thynketh / ye ben wel y-shape
 I trowe / þat ye dronken han wyn Ape 44
 And that is / whan men pleyen *with* a straw
 And with his speche / the Cook wax wroth & wraw
 And on the Manciple / bigan he nodde faste [leaf 108]
 ffor lakke of speche / and doun the hors hym caste 48
 Wher as he lay / til þat men vp hym took
 This was / a fair chyuahee of a Cook^t
 Allas / he nadde yholde hym / by his ladel
 And er þat he / agayn were in his sadel 52
 Ther was gret showuyng^t bothe to and fro
 To lifte hym vp / and muchel care and wo
 So vnweldy / was this sory palled goost^t
 And to the Manciple / thanne spak oure hoost^t 56
 ¶ By cause // drynke hath domynacioñ
 Vp on this man / by my sauacioñ
 I trowe he lewedly / telle wolde his tale
 ffor were it wyn / or old / or moisty Ale 60

That he hath dronke / he speketh in his nose 61
 And fneseth faste / and eek^t he hath the pose
 He hath also to do / moore than ynow
 To kepen hym / and his capil / out of the Slow 64
 And if he falle / from his capil eft soone
 Than shal we alle / haue ynow to doone
 In lifynge vp / his heuy dronken cors
 Telle on thy tale / of hym make I no fors 68
 But yet Manciple / in feith thow art to nyce
 Thus openly / repreue hym of his vice
 Another day / he wole *par* Auenture
 Reclayme thee / and brynge thee to lure 72
 I mene / he speke wole / of smale thynges
 As for to pynchen / at thy rekenynges
 That were nat honeste / if it cam to preef
 ¶ No quod the Manciple / that were a gret mescheef 76
 So myghte he lightly / brynge me in the snare
 Yet hadde I leuere / payen for the Mare
 Which he rit on / than he sholde *with* me stryue
 I wol nat wrathe hym / also mote I thryue 80
 That *þat* I spak^t I seyde it in my bourde
 And wite what^t I haue here in a gourde
 A draughte of wyn / ye of a rype grape
 And right anon / ye shul seen a good Iape 84
 This Cook / shal drynke ther of if I may
 Vp peyne of deeth / he wol nat seye me nay
 [¹An]d certeynly / to tellen as it was [¹ *Rats.* leaf 108, back]
 Of this vessel / the Cook drank faste / allas 88
 What neded it^t he drank ynow biforn
 And whan he hadde / powped in this horn
 To the Manciple / he took the gourde agayn
 And of that drynke / the Cook was wonder fayn 92
 And thanked hym / in swich wise as he kowde
 ¶ Thanne gan oure hoost^t to laughen wonder lowde
 And seyde / I se wel it is necessarie
 Where *þat* we goon / good drynke we *with* vs carye 96

ffor that wol turne / rancour and disese	97
Tacord and loue / a[nd] many a wrong Appese	
¶ O Bacus / yblessed be thy name	
That so kanst' turnen / earnest in to game	100
Worshipe and thank' be to thy deitee	
Of that matere / ye gete namoore for me	
Telle on thy [tale] Manciple / I the preye	
Wel sir quod he / now herkneth what I seye	104

[*Note to l. 147, p. 581.*]

p. 581, l. 147. ¶ *Verum quid prodest/ diligens custodia cum vxor impudica seruari non possit pudica non debeat/ feda enim custod[ia] est castitatis necessitas / pulera certe adamatur / feda facile concupiscit. Difficile custoditur quam plures amant.* [MS. leaf 109.]

¶ Here bigynneth the Manciples tale / of the Crowe / [on leaf 108, back]

Whan Phebus / dwelled here / in this erthe adoun
 As olde bokes / maken mencion
 He was / the mooste lusty bachiler
 In al this world / and eek the beste Archer 108
 He slow Phitoñ the serpent as he lay
 Slepynge agayn the sonne vp on a day
 And many another / noble worthy dede
 He *with* his bowe wroghte / as men may rede 112
 Pleyen he koude / on euery Mynstralcy
 And syngen / þat it was a melodye
 To heren / of his clere voys / the soun
 Certes / the kyng of Thebes Amphion 116
 That *with* his syngyng walled that Citee
 Koude neuere syngen / half so wel as he
 Ther-to / he was the semelieste man
 That is / or was / sith þat the world bigan 120
 What nedeth it hise fetures to discryue
 ffor in this world / was noon so fair on lyue
 He was ther with / fulfild of gentillesse
 Of honour / and of parfit worthynesse 124
 ¶ This Phebus / þat was flour of Bachelrye [leaf 109]
 As wel / in fredom as in Chiualrye
 ffor his desport in signe eek of Victorie
 Of Phitoñ / so as telleth vs the storie 128
 Was wont to beren / in his hand a bowe
 Now hadde this Phebus / in his hous a Crowe
 Which in a Cage / he fostred many a day
 And taughte it speke / as men teche a Iay 132

Whit was this Crowe / as is a Snow whit Swan 133
 And contrefete / the speche of euery man
 He kowde / whan he sholde telle a tale
 Ther-with in al this world / no nyghtyngale 136
 Ne koude / by an hondred thousand deel
 Syngen / so wonder myrily and weel
 ¶ Now hadde this Phebus / in his hous a wyf/
 Which þat he louede / moore than his lyf 140
 And nyght/ and day / dide euere his diligence
 Hire for to plesse / and doon hire reuerence
 Saue oonly / that the sothe / if I shal sayn
 Ialous he was / and wolde han kept hire fayn 144
 ffor hym were looth / byiaped for to be
 And so is euery wight in swich degree
 But al for naught/ for it auaiileth noght [Latin note, p. 579]
 A good wyf/ that is clene in werk and thoght 148
 Sholde nat be kept in noon awayt certayn
 And trewely / the labour is in vayn
 To kepe a shrewe / for it wol nat be
 This holde I / for a verray nycetee 152
 To spille labour / for to kepe wyues
 Thus writen olde clerkes in hir lyues
 ¶ But now to purpos / as I first bigan
 This worthy Phebus / dooth al that he kan 156
 To plesen hire / wenyng for swich plesaunce
 And for his manhode / and his gouernaunce
 That no man / sholde han put hym from hire grace
 But god it woot ther may no man embrace 160
 As to destreyne a thyng which þat nature
 Hath naturelly / set in a creature
 ¶ Take any bryd / and put it in a Cage
 And do al thyn entente / and thy corage 164
 [To] fostre it tendrely / with mete and drynke [¹ Rats. leaf 109, back]
 Of alle deyntees / þat thow kanst bithynke
 And kepe it al so clenly as thow may
 Al though his Cage / of gold / be neuer so gay 168

Yet hath this bryd / by .xx. thousand fold 169
 Leuere in a fforest^t þat is rude and cold
 Gon ete wormes / and swich wrecchednesse
 ffor euere this bryd / wol doon his bisynesse 172
 To eschape out of his Cage / if he may
 His libertee / this bryd desireth ay
 ¶ Lat take a Cat and fostre hym wel with Milk^t
 And tendre flessch / and make his couche of silk^t 176
 And lat hym seen a Mous / go by the wal
 Anon he weyueth / Milk / and flessch and al
 And euery deyntee / þat is in that hous
 Swich appetit hath he / to ete a Mous 180
 Lo / heere hath lust his domynacioñ
 And appetit^t flemeth discrecioñ
 ¶ A she wolf hath also / a vileyns kynde
 The lewedeste wolf / þat she may fynde 184
 And leest of reputacioñ / that wol she take
 In tyme / whan hire lust^t to han a make
 ¶ Alle thise ensamples / speke I by thise men
 That ben vntrewe / but no thyng by wommen 188
 ffor men han euere / a likerous appetit
 On lower thyng^t / to parformen hir delit
 Than on hire wyues / be they neuer so faire
 Ne neuer so trewe / ne so debonaire 192
 flessh is so newfangel / with meschañce
 That we ne konne / in no thyng han plesañce
 That sowneth in to vertu / any while
 ¶ This Phebus / which þat thoughte vp on no gile 196
 Deceyued was / for al his iolitee
 ffor vnder hym / another hadde she
 A man / of litel reputacioñ
 Nat worth to Phebus in comparisoñ 200
 The moore harm is / it happeth ofte so
 Of which ther cometh / muchel harm and wo
 And so bifel / whan Phebus was absent^t
 His wyf anon / hath for hire lemman sent^t 204

Hir lemman / certes this a knauyssh speche [leaf 116]
 floryeueth it me / and that I yow biseche
 The wise Plato seith / as ye may rede
 The word moot nede / acorde *with* the dede 208
 If men shal telle / *propely* a thyng^t
 The word / moot cosyn be to the werkyng^t
 I am a boystous man / right thus seye I
 Ther nys no difference / trewely 212
 Bitwix a wyf/ *pat* is of heigh degree
 If of hire body / deshoneste she be
 And a poore wenche / oother than this
 If it so be / they werke bothe amys 216
 But *pat* the gentile / in estat aboue
 She shal be clepid his lady / as in loue
 And for that oother / is a poore womman
 She shal be clepid / his wenche / or his lemman 220
 And god it woot/ myn owene deere brother
 Men leyn *pat* oon / as lowe as lyth that oother
 ¶ Right so / bitwix a ^{sine titulo}titlelees tirañt
 And an Outlawe / or a thief errañt 224
 The same I seye / ther is no difference
 To Alisandre / was told this sentence
 That for the tirañt / is of gretter myght^t
 By force of meyne / for to sleen down right^t 228
 And brennen hous and hoom / and make al playn
 Lo / ther fore / is he clepid a Capitayn
 And for the Outlawe / hath but smal meynee
 And may nat doon / so gret an harm as he 232
 Ne brynge a contree / to so gret meschief
 Men clepen hym / an Outlawe or a thief/
 But for I am a man / noght textuel
 I wol noght telle of textes / neuer a del 236
 I wol go to my tale / as I bigan
 ¶ Whan Phebus wyf/ hadde sent for hire lemman
 Anon they wroghte / al hire lust volage
 The white Crowe / *pat* heng ay in the Cage 240

Biheld hir werk/ and seyde neuer a word 241
 And whan that hoom was come / Phebus the lord
 This Crowe sang^t Cokkow / Cokkow Cokkow
 ¶ What bryd quod Phebus / what song^t syngestow 244
 [1N]e were thow wont^t so myrily to syngre [¹ Rats. leaf 110, back]
 That to myn herte / it was a reioysynge
 To here thy voys / allas what song is this
 ¶ By god quod he / I syngre nat amys 248
 Phebus quod he / for al thy worthynesse
 ffor al thy beautee / and thy gentillesse
 ffor al thy song^t and al thy Mynstraleye
 ffor al thy waityng^t blered is thyn eye 252
 With oon / of litel reputaciō
 Nat worth to thee / in comparisō
 The montañe of a gnat^t so mote I thryue
 ffor in thy bed / thy wif I sey hym &cetera 256
 What wol ye moore / the Crowe anon hym tolde
 By sadde toknes / and by wordes bolde
 How þat his wyf/ hadde doon hire lecherye
 Hym to gret shame / and to gret vileynye 260
 And tolde hym / ofte he say it with hise eyen
 ¶ This Phebus / gan awayward for to wryen
 And thoughte / his sorweful herte brast atwo
 His bowe he bente / and sette ther-Inne a flo 264
 And in his Ire / his wyf^t thanne hath he slayn
 This is theeffect/ ther nys namoore to sayn
 ffor sorwe of which / he brak his Mynstraleye
 Bothe harpe / and Lute / and Gyterne / and Sawtrye 268
 And eek he brak/ his arwes / and his bowe
 And after that/ thus spak he to the Crowe
 ¶ Traytour quod he / with tonge of Scorpion
 Thow hast me broght^t to my confusiō 272
 Allas þat I was wroght^t why nere I ded
 O deere wyf/ O gemme of lustihed
 That were to me / so sad / and eek so trewe
 Now lystow ded / with face pale of hewe 276

fiul giltlees / that dorste I swere ywys 277
 O rakel hand / to doon so foule amys
 O trouble wit / o Ire recchelees
 That vnaused / smytest giltlees 280
 O wantrust^t ful of fals suspicioñ
 Where was thy wit and thy discrecioñ
 O euery man / be war of rakelnesse
 Ne trowe ye no thyng^t with outen strong wisesse 284
 Smyt nat to soone / er þat ye witen why [leaf 111]
 And beth aused / wel and sobrelly
 Er ye do / any execucioñ
 Vp on youre Ire / for suspicioñ 288
 ¶ Allas / a thousand folk / hath rakel Ire
 fully fordoon / or broght hem in the Myre
 Allas / for sorwe / I wol my seluen sle
 ¶ And to the Crowe / o false thief seyde he 292
 I wol thee quyte anon / thy false tale
 Thow songe whilom / lyk a nyghtyngale
 Now shaltow false thief / thy song forgon
 And eek^t thy white fetheres euerichon 296
 Ne neuere in al thy lyf / ne shaltow speke
 Thus shal men / on a traytour ben awreke
 Thow and thyn offsprynge^t euere shul be blake
 Ne neuere / swete noyse shul ye make 300
 But euere crye / agayn tempest^t and rayn
 In tokenynge / þat thurgh thee my wyf is slayn
 And to the Crowe he stirte / and that anon
 And pulled / hise white fetheres euerichon 304
 And made hym blak^t and refte hym al his song^t
 And eek his speche / and out at dore hym slong^t
 Vn to the deuel / which I hym bitake
 And for this cas / ben alle Crowes blake 308
 ¶ Lordynges / by this ensample / I yow preye
 Beth war / and taketh kepe what I seye
 Ne telleth neuere / no man in youre lyf
 How þat another man / hath dight his wyf 312

He wol yow haten / mortally certeyn 313
 ¶ Daun Salomon / as wise clerkes seyn
 Techeth a man / to kepen his tonge wel
 But as I seyde / I nam nat textuel 316
 But nathelees / thus taughte me my Dame
 My sone / thenk on the Crowe a goddes name
 My sone / keep wel thy tonge / and kepe thy freend
 A wikke tonge / is worse than a feend 320
 My sone / from a feend / men may hem blesse
 My sone / god / of his endelees goodnesse
 Walled a tonge / with teeth / and lippes eke
 ffor man sholde hym auyse / what he speke 324
 [¹My s]one / ful ofte / for to mucche speche [¹Rats. If 111, bk]
 [¹H]ath many a man ben spilt^t as clerkes teche
 But for litel speche / auyself
 Is no man shent^t to speke generally 328
 My sone / thy tonge / sholdestow restreyne
 At alle tymes / but whan thow doost thy peyne
 To speke of god / in honour and prayere
 The firste vertu sone / if thow wolt leere 332
 Is to restreyne / and kepe wel thy tonge
 Thus lernen children / whan þat they ben yonge
 My sone / of muchel spekyng^t yuele auysed
 Ther lasse spekyng^t hadde ynow suffised 336
 Comth muchel harm / thus was me told & taught^t
 In muchel speche / synne wanteth naught^t
 Wostow wher of/ a rakel tonge serueth
 Right as a swerd / forkitteth and forkerueth 340
 An arm atwo / my deere sone right so
 A tonge / kitteth frendship al atwo
 A Ianglere / is to god abhomynable
 Rede Salomon / so wys and honorable 344
 Rede Dauid in his psalmes / rede Senekke
 My sone / spek noght^t but with thyn hed thow beke
 Dissimule as thow were deef/ if þat thow heere
 A Ianglere speke / of perilous matere 348

¶ The flemyng seith / and lerne it if thee leste 349
 That litel langlyngt causeth muchel reste
 My sone / if thou / no wikked word hast seyð
 Thee thar nat drede / for to be biwreyd 352
 But he þat hath mysseyd / I dar wel sayn
 He may by no wey / clepe his word agayn
 Thyng that is sayd / is seyð / and forth it gooth
 Though hym repente / or be hym leeft or looth 356
 He is his thral / to whom þat he hath sayd
 A tale / of which he is now yuele apayd
 My sone be war / and be noon Auctour newe
 Of tidynges / wher they ben false / or trewe 360
 Wher so thou come / aminges heye / or lowe
 Kepe wel thy tonge / and thynk vp on the Crowe 362

¶ Here is ended / the Manciples tale / of the Crowe 𐀚

GROUP B. (α. FRAGMENT II.)

§ 1. MAN OF LAW'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

O The prohemie of the Mannes tale of Lawe.
 vre hoost saw wel / that the brighte sonne [leaf 112]
 The ark^t of his artificial day hath ronne
 The ferthe part^t and half an hour and moore
 And thogh he were nat^t depe ystert in loore 4
 He wiste / it was the xvij^{the} day
 Of April / that is messenger to May
 And saw wel / þat the shadwe of euery tree
 Was as in lengthe / the same quantitee 8
 That was the body erect^t that caused it
 And therfore by the shadwe / he took his wit^t
 That Phebus / which þat shoon so cleer and brighte
 Degrees was .xlv. clombe on highte 12
 And for that day / as in that latitude
 It was ten at the Clokke / he gan conclude
 And sodeynly / he plighte his hors aboute
 ¶ Lordynges quod he / I warne yow al this route 16
 The ferthe party / of this day is goon
 Now for the loue of god / and of Seint Iohn
 Leseth no tyme / as ferforth as ye may
 Lordynges the tyme / it wasteth nyght^t and day 20
 And steleth from vs / what pryuely slepynge
 And what thurgh necligence / in oure wakyng
 As dooth the streem / þat turneth neuere agayn
 Descendynge / fro the montaigne in to playn 24
 Wel kan Senec^t and many a Philosophre
 Biwaillen tyme / moore than gold in cofre
 ffor los of catel / may recouered be
 But los of tyme / shendeth vs quod he 28

It wol nat come agayn / with outen drede	
Namoore / than wol Malkyns maydenhede	
Whan she hath lost it / in hir wantownesse	
Lat vs nat mowlen thus in ydelnesse	32
¶ Sire man of lawe quod he / so haue ye blys	
Tel vs a tale anon / as forward is	
Ye been submitted thurgh youre free assent ^r	
To stonden in this cas / at my Iuggement ^r	36
[A]quiteth yow now / of youre biheste	[leaf 112, back]
Thanne haue ye doon youre deuoir atte leeste	
¶ Hoost ^r quod he depardieux ich assente	
To breken forward / is nat myn entente	40
Biheste is dette / and I wol holde fayn	
Al my biheste / I kan no better sayn	
ffor swich lawe / as a man yeueth another wight/	
He sholde hym self / vsen it by right ^r	44
Thus wol oure text / but nathelees <i>certein</i>	
I kan right now / no thrifty tale seyn	
That Chaucer / thogh he kan but lewedly	
On metres / and on rymyng craftily	48
Hath seyð hem / in swich englissh as he kan	
Of olde tyme / as knoweth many a man	
And if he ne haue nat seyð hem / leue brother	
In o book ^r he hath seyð hem in another	52
ffor he hath toold / of louers vp and down	
Mo than Ouide / made of mencioun	
In his epistles / þat been ful olde	
What sholde I tellen hem / syn they been tolde	56
In yowthe he made / of Ceys and Alcione	
And sithen / hath he spoke of euerychone	
Thise noble wyues / and thise loueres eke	
Who so þat wole / his large volum seke	60
Clepyd / the Seintes legende of Cupide	
Ther maystow seen / the large woundes wyde	
Of Lucesse / and of Babilan Tisbee	
The swerd of Dido / for the false Enee	64

The tree of Phillis / for hir Demophon	
The pleinte of Dianire / and of hermyon	
Of Adriane / and of ysiphilee	
The barayne Ile / stondynge in the See	68
The dreynte leandre / for his Erro	
The terys of Eleyne / and eke the wo	
Of Brixseyde / and of the Ladomea	
The crueltee / of the queene Medea	72
The litel children / hangyng by the hals	
ffor thy Iason / that was of loue so fals	
O Ypermystre / Penolopee / Alceste	
Youre wifhod / he comendeth with the beste	76
But <i>certainly</i> / no word ne writeth he	[leaf 113]
Of thilke wikke ensample / of Canacee	
That loued / hir owene brother synfully	
Of swiche cursed stories / I sey fy	80
Or ellis / of Tyro Appollonius	
How þat / the cursed kyng Antiochus	
Birafte his doghter / of hir maydenhede	
That is / so horrible a tale for to rede	84
When he hir threw / vp on the pauement	
And ther fore / he of ful auisement	
Nolde neuere write / in noon of his <i>sermons</i>	
Of swiche / vnkynde abhominacions	88
Ne I wol noon reherce / if þat I may	
But of my tale / how shal I doon this day	
Me were looth / be likned doutelees	
To Muses / þat been clepyd Pierides	92
Methamorphosios / woot what I mene	
But nathelees / I recche noght a bene	
Thogh I come after hym / with hawe bake	
I speke in prose / and lat hym rymes make	96
And with that word / he with a sobre cheere	
Bigan his tale / as ye shal after heere	98

[No break in the MS.]

¶ Here bigynneth the tale.

[THE PROLOGUE.]

O hateful harm / condicion of pouerte 99
With thurst^t with cold / *with* hunger so confoundid

To axen help / thee shameth in thyn herte
If thou noon axe / with nede artow so woundid 102
That verray nede / vnwrappeth al thy wounde hid
Maugree thyn heed / thou most for Indigence
Or stele / or begge / or borwe thy despence 105

Thow blamest Crist^t and seist ful bitterly
He mysdeparteth / richesse temporal
Thy neghebore / thow witest synfully
And seist^t thow hast to lite / and he hath al 109
Parfay seistow / som tyme he rekne shal
Whan þat his tayl / shal brennen in the gleede
ffor he noght helpeth / nedefulle in hir nede 112

[¹He]rke / what is the sentence of the wise [¹ *Kats.* leaf 113, bk]
Bet is to dyen / than haue Indigence
Thy selue neghebor / wol thee despise
If thow be pouere / fare wel thy reuerence 116
Yet of the wise man / tak^t this sentence
Alle the dayes / of pouere men been wikke
Be war ther fore / er thow come to that prikke 119

¶ If thou be pouere / thy brother hateth thee
And alle thy freendes / fleen from thee allas
O riche Marchauntz / ful of wele been ye
O noble / O prudent folk^t / as in this cas 123
Youre bagges / been noght filled *with* ambes as
But with sys cynk^t. that renneth for youre chaunce
At Cristemasse / murye may ye daunce 126

Ye seken lond and see / for youre wynnynge
 As wise folk^t ye knowen al thestat^t
 Of regnes / ye been fadres of tidynge
 And tales / bothe of pees and of debat^t 120
 I were right now / of tales desolat^t
 Nere þat a Marchaunt / goon is many a yere
 Me taughte a tale / which þat ye shal heere 133

As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.

1. 161. ¶ *Europa est tertia pars mundi.* [MS, leaf 114.]

1. 197. *Ceptra phoronei / fratrum discordia Thebe
 flammam Phetontis Decalionis aque
 In stellis Priami species audacia Turni
 Sensus vlixens / herculeusque vigor.* [MS, lf 114, bk.]

1. 295. ¶ *Vnde Ptholomeus libro .ii. capitulum g[raecum] .i. primi
 motus celi duo sunt / quorum vnus est qui [mouet totum] celum /
 semper ab Oriente in Occidentem vno [modo] super orbes &c / Ita
 aliter vero motus est qui mo[ue]t orbem stellarum currencium /
 contra motum primum videlicet ab Occidente in Orientem super
 alios duos polos &c.* [MS, leaf 116.] [*The MS is partly gnawn
 away by rats.*]

1. 309. ¶ *Omnes concordati sunt / quod elecciones sint / de-
 biles nisi in diuitibus / habent enim isti licet debilitentur eorum
 elecciones radicem .i. nativitates eorum que confortat omnem /
 planetam / debilem in itinere &c.* [MS, leaf 116.]

1. 421. ¶ *nota de inopinato dolore* ¶ *Semper mundane leticie /
 tristicia repentina succedit / Mundana igitur felicitas multis ama-
 ritudinibus est dispersa extrema gaudij luctus occupat / Audi
 ergo salubre consilium in die bonorum ne inmemor sis malorum.*
 [MS, leaf 117, back.]

1. 771. ¶ *Quid turpius ebrioso / cui fetor in ore / tremor in
 corpore / qui promit stulta / prodit occulta / cui mens alienatur /
 facies transformatur / nullum enim latet secretum vbi regnat
 ebrietas.* [MS, leaf 122, back.]

1. 925. ¶ *O. extrema libidinis turp[itu]do que non solum men-
 tem effemi[nat] set eciam corpus eneruat / se[mper] sequuntur
 dolor & penitencia post &c.* [MS, leaf 125.]

1. 1132. ¶ *A mane vsque [ad vesperam mu]tabitur tempus /
 t[em]p[or]is t[em]p[or]um & gaudent ad s[on]um organi.* [MS, leaf
 128.] [*MS is gnawn away by rats.*]

1. 1136. ¶ *Quis vnquam vnica[m] diem totam [duxit] in sua
 dileccione iocundam / quem [in ali]qua parte diei reatus con-
 sciencie / v[el] impetus ire / vel motus concupiscen[ti]e non tur-
 bauerit / quem liuor Inuidie vel ardor auaricie / vel tumor superbie
 non vexauerit / quem aliqua iactura vel offensa / vel passio non
 commecerit &c.* [MS, leaf 128.] [*The MS is partly gnawn away.*]

[THE TALE.]

¶ In Surrye whilom / dwelte a compaignye
 Of chapmen riche / and ther-to sadde and trewe
 That wyde where / senten hir spicerye
 Clothes of gold / and Satyns riche of hewe 137
 Hir cheffare / was so thrifty and so newe
 That euery wight hath deyntee to cheffare
 With hem / and eek to sellen hem hir ware 140

¶ Now fil it / that the maistres of that sort
 Han shapen hem / to Rome for to wende
 Were it for chaphod / or for desport
 Noon oother message / wolde they thider sende 144
 But coomen hem self to Rome / this is the ende
 And in swich place / as thoughte hem anauntage
 ffor hir entente / they take hir herbergage 147

¶ Soiourned han thise Marchauntz / in that town [leaf 114]
 A certein tyme / as fil to hir plesaunce
 But so bifel / þat the excellent renoun
 Of the Emperours doghter / dame Custaunce 151
 Reported was / with euery circumstaunce
 Vn to thise Surryen Marchauntz / in swich wise
 ffro day / to day / as I shal yow deuyse 154

¶ This was the *commune* voys / of euery man
 Oure Emperour of Rome / god hym se
 A doghter hath / þat syn the world bigan
 To rekne as wel / hir goodnesse as beautee 158
 Nas neuere swich another / as is she
 I pray to god / in honour hir sustene
 And wolde she were / of al Europe the queene [Latin note, p. 133.]

¶ In hire is heigh beautee / with oute pryde
 Youthe / with outen grenchede / or folye
 To alle hir werkes / vertu is hir gyde
 Humblesse / hath slayn in hire al tirannye 165
 She is Mirour / of al curteisye
 Hir herte / is verray chambre of holynesse
 Hir hand Ministre / of fredam / for almesse 168

¶ And al this voys was sooth / as god is trewe
 But now to purpos / lat vs come agayn
 Thise Marchauntz / han doon fraught hir shippes newe
 And whan they han / this blisful mayden sayn 172
 Hom to Surrye / been they went ful fayn
 And doon hir nedes / as they han doon yooore
 And lyuen in wele / I kan sey yow namoore 175

¶ Now fil it that thise Marchauntz stode in *grace*
 Of hym / that was the Sowdan of Surrye
 ffor whan they coome / from any straunge place
 He wolde / of his benygne curteisye 179
 Maken hem good cheere / and bisily espye
 Tidynges / of sondry regnes for to leere
 The wondres / that they myghte seen or heere 182

¶ [Am]onges othere thynges specially [leaf 114, back]
 Thise Marchauntz han hym told / of dame Custaunce
 So greet noblesse / in earnest ^{i. ceriose} seriously
 That this Sowdan / hath caught so greet plesaunce 186
 To han hir figure / in his remembraunce
 That al his lust / and al his bisy cure
 Was for to loue hire / whil his lyf may dure 189

¶ Paraurenture / in thilke large book^t
 Which þat men clepe the heuene / ywriten was
 With sterres / whan þat he his birthe took/
 That he for loue / sholde han his deth allas 193

fior in the sterres / clerer than is glas
 Is writen god woot who so koude it rede
 The deeth of enery man / with outen drede 196

¶ In sterres / many a wynter / ther biforn [*Latin note, p. 133.*]
 Was writen the deeth / of Ector / Achilles
 Of Pompei / Iulius / er they were born
 The stryf of Thebes / and of Hercules 200
 Of Sampson / Turnus / and of Socrates
 The deeth / but mennes wittes been so dulle
 That no wight kan wel rede it atte fulle 203

¶ This Sowdan / for his pruce conseil sente
 And shortly / of this matere for to pace
 He hath to hem / declared his entente
 And seyde hem *certein* / but he myghte haue *grace* 207
 To han Custaunce / with Inne a litel space
 He nas but deed / and charged hem in hye
 To shapen / for his lyf som remedye 210

¶ Diuerse men / diuerse thynges seyden
 They argumenten / casten vp and down
 Many a subtil reson / forth they leyden
 They speken of Magyk / and Abusioun 214
 But finally / as in conclusioun
 They kan nat seen / in that noon Auauntage
 Ne in noon oother wey / saue mariage 217

¶ Thanne sawe they ther Inne / swich difficultee [*leaf 115*]
 By wey of reson / for to speke al playn
 By cause / þat ther was swich diuersitee
 Bitwene hir bothe lawes / þat they sayn 221
 They trowe / þat no cristen Prince wolde fayn
 Wedden his child / vnder oure lawes swete
 That vs was taught by Mahoun oure prophete 224

¶ And he answerde / rather than I lese
 Custaunce / I wol be cristned doutelees
 I moot ben hires / I may noon oother chese
 I pray yow / hold youre argumentz in pees 228
 Saueth my lyf / and both noght recchelees
 To geten hire / þat hath my lyf in cure
 ffor in this wo / I may nat longe endure 231

¶ What nedeth / gretter dilataciō
 I seye / by tretys / and embassadrye
 And by the Popes¹ mediaciō [¹ Inked out in the MS, and byshop
 written over it.]
 And al the chirche / and al the chivalrie 235
 That in destrucciō of Mawmetrie
 And in encrees / of Cristes lawe deere
 They been acorded / so as ye shal heere 238

¶ How þat the Sowdan / and his Baronage
 And alle his liges / sholde yeristned be
 And he shal han / Custaunce in mariage
 And certeyn gold / I noot what quantitee 242
 And heer to / founden sufficient seuretee
 This same acord / was sworn on either syde
 Now faire Custaunce / al myghty god thee gyde 245

¶ Now wolde som men / waiten as I gesse
 That I sholde tellen / al the purueiaunce
 That Themperour / of his grete noblesse
 Hath shapen for his doghter / dame Custaunce 249
 Wel may men knowen / þat so greet ordinaunce
 May no man tellen / in a litel clause
 As was arrayed / for so heigh a cause 252

[Bis]shopes been shapen / with hire for to wende (leaf 113, bk)
 Lordes / ladies / knyghtes of renoun
 And oother folk ynowe / this is thende
 And notified is / thurgh out the town 256

That euery wight' with greet deuocioun
 Sholde preyen crist' þat he this mariage
 Receyue in gree / and spede this viage 259

¶ The day is comen / of hir departyng
 I seye / the woful day fatal / is come
 That ther may be / no lenger tarynge
 But forthward they hem dresse / alle and some 263
 Custaunce / that was with sorwe all ouercome
 fful pale arist' and dresseth hire to wende
 ffor wel she seeth / ther nys noon oother ende 266

¶ Allas / what wonder is it/ thogh she wepte
 That shal be sent' to straunge nacion
 ffro freendes / þat so tendrely hir kepte
 And to be bounden / vndur subieccion 270
 Of oon / she knoweth noght his condicion
 Housbondes been alle goode / and han been yoore
 That knowen wyues / I dar sey yow namoore 273

¶ ffader she seyde / thy wrecched child Custaunce
 Thy yonge doghter / fostred vp so softe
 And ye my moder / my souereyn plesaunce
 Ouer alle thyng / outtaken crist on lofte 277
 Custaunce youre child / hir recomaundeth ofte
 Vn to your grace / for I shal to Surrye
 Ne shal I neuere / seen yow moore with eye 280

¶ Allas / vn to the Barbre nacion
 I moste anon / syn þat it is youre wille
 But crist' that starf for oure redempcion
 So yeue me grace / hise hestes to fulfille 284
 I wrecche womman / no fors thogh I spille
 Wommen are born / to thraldom and penaunce
 And to been / vnder mannes gouernaunce 287

¶ I trowe at Troye / whan Pirrus brak^t the wal [leaf 116]
 Or Ylion / brent hadde Thebes the Citee
 Nat Rome / for the harm thurgh Hanybal
 That Romayns / hath venquysshed tymes thre 291
 Nas herd / swich tendre wepyng for pitee
 As in the chambre was / for hir departyng
 But forth she moot^t wher so she wepe or synge 294

¶ O firste moeuer / cruel firmament [Latin note, p. 133.]
 With thy diurnal sweigh / þat crowdest ay
 And hurlest al / fro Est / til Occident
 That naturelly / wolde holde another way 298
 Thy crowdyng / set the heuene in swich array
 At bigynnyng^t of this fiers viage
 That cruel Mars / hath slayn this mariage 301

¶ Infortunat ascendent^t tortuous
 Of which the lord / is helpees falle allas
 Out of his angle / in to the derkest hous
 O. Mars / o. Atazir / as in this cas 305
 O fiele Moone / vnhappy been thy pas
 Thow knytest thee / ther thow nart nat receyued
 Ther thow were wel / fro thennes artow weyued 308

¶ Inprudent Emperour of Rome / allas [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Was ther no Philosophre / in al thy town
 Is no tyme bet than oother / in swich cas
 Of viage / is ther noon eleccioun 312
 Namely / to folk of heigh condicioun
 Nat whan a roote / is of a burthe yknowe
 Allas / we been / to lewed or to slowe 315

¶ To shipe is broght^t this woful faire mayde
 Solempnely / with euery circumstaunce
 Now Ihesu crist^t be with yow alle / she seyde
 Ther nys namoore / but fare wel faire Custaunce 319

She peyneth hire / to make good contenaunce
 And forth I lete hir Sayle / in this manere
 And turne I wole / agayn to my matere 322

¶ [T]he moder of the Sowdan / welle of vices [leaf 116, back]
 Espied hath / hir sones pleynt entente
 How he wol lete / his olde sacrifices
 And right anon / she for hir conseil sente 326
 And they ben come / to knowen what she mente
 And whan assembled was / this folk in feere
 She sette hir down / and seyde as ye shal heere 329

¶ Lordes quod she / ye knowen euerychon
 How þat my sone / in point is for to lete
 The holy lawes / of oure Alkaron
 Yeuen by goddes message¹ Makomete [¹ a late cast for ex is over the g.]
 But oon avow / to grete god I hete
 The lyf shal rather / out of my body sterte
 Than Makometes lawe / out of myn herte 336

¶ What sholde vs tiden / of this newe lawe
 But thralldom to oure bodies / and penaunce
 And afterward / in helle to be drawe
 for we reneyed / Mahoun oure creaunce 340
 But lordes / wol ye maken assuraunce
 As I shal seyn / assentyng to my loore
 And I shal make vs sauf / for euere moore 343

¶ They sworn / and assenten euery man
 To lyue *with* hire and dye / and by hir stonde
 And euerich / in the beste wise he kan
 To strengthen hire / shal alle hise freendes fonde 347
 And she hath / this emprise ytake on honde
 Which ye shal heren / þat I shal deuyse
 And to hem alle / she spak right in this wise 350

¶ We shul first feyne vs / cristendom to take
 Could water / shal nat greue vs but a lite
 And I shal / swich a feste / and reuel make
 That as I trowe / I shal the Sowdan quyte 354
 ffor thogh his wyf / be cristned neuer so whyte
 She shal haue nede / to wasshe away the rede
 Thogh she / a font ful water with hir lede 357

¶ O Sowdanesse roote of Iniquitee [leaf 117]
 Virago / thow Semyrame the secounde
 O Serpent/ vnder femynynytee
 Lyk to the Serpent/ depe in helle ybounde 361
 O feyned womman / al that may confounde
 Vertu and Innocence / thurgh thy malice
 Is bred in thee / as nest of euery vice 364

¶ O Sathan enuyous / syn thilke day
 That thow were chaced / from oure heritage
 Wel knowestow to wommen / the olde way
 Thow madest Eua / brynge vs in seruage 368
 Thow wolt fordoon / this cristen mariage
 Thyn Instrument so weylawey the while
 Makestow of wommen / whan thou wolt bigile 371

¶ This Sowdanesse / whom I thus blame and warye
 Leet pryuely hir conseil / goon his way
 What sholde I in this tale / lenger tarye
 She rideth to the Sowdan / on a day 375
 And seyde hym / þat she wolde reneye hir lay
 And cristendom / of preestes handes fonge
 Repentyng hire / she hethen was so longe 378

¶ Bisekyng hym / to doon hire that honour
 That she moste han / the cristen folk to feste
 To plesen hem / I shall do my labour
 The Sowdan seith / I wol doon at youre heste 382

And knelynge / thanketh hire of that requeste
 So glad he was / he nyste what to seye
 She kiste hir sone / and hom she gooth hir weye 385

[PART II.]

¶ Arryued been this cristen folk to londe
 In Surrye / with a gret solempne route
 And hastily / this Sowdan sente his sonde
 first to his moder / and al the regne aboute 389
 And seyde his wyf / was comen out of doute
 And preye hire / for to ryde agayn the queene
 The honour / of his regne to sustene 392

¶ Greet was the prees / and riche was tharray [leaf 117, back]
 Of Surryens / and Romayns met yfeere
 The moder of the Sowdan / riche and gay
 Receyueth hire / with also glad a cheere 396
 As any moder / myghte hir doghter deere
 And to the nexte Citee / ther bisyde
 A softe paas / solempnely they ryde 399

¶ Naught trowe I / the triumphe of Iulius
 Of which þat lucan / maketh swich a boost
 Was roiallour / ne moore curyus
 Than was the assemblee / of this blisful oost 403
 But this scorpion / this wikked goost
 The Sowdanesse / for al hir flaterynge
 Caste vnder this / ful mortally to styng 406

¶ The Sowdan cometh hym self / soone after this
 So roially / þat wonder is to telle
 He welcometh hire / with alle ioye and blys
 And thus in myrthe and Ioye / I lete hem dwelle 410

The fruyt of this matere / is þat I telle
 Whan tyme cam / men thoughte it for the beste
 That reuel stynte / and men go to hir reste 413

¶ The tyme cam / this olde Sowdanesse
 Ordeyned hath this feste / of which I tolde
 And to the feste / cristen folk hem dresse
 In general / ye bothe yonge and olde 417
 Heer may men feste / and roialtee biholde
 And deyntees mo / than I kan yow deuyse
 But al to deere / they boghte it er they ryse 420

¶ O sodeyn wo / that euere art Successour [*Latin notes*, p. 133.]
 To worldly blisse / spreynð with bitternesse
 The ende of the ioie / of oure worldly labour
 Wo occupieth / the fyn of oure gladnesse 424
 Herke this conseil / for thy sikernesse
 Vp on thy glade day / haue in thy mynde
 The vnwar wo / or harm / þat comth bihynde 427

¶ ffor shortly / for to tellen / at a word [*leaf 118*]
 The Sowdan / and the cristen euerychone
 Been al to-hewe / and stiked at the bord
 But it were oonly / dame Custaunce allone 431
 This olde sowdanesse / cursed krone
 Hath with hir freendes / doon this cursed dede
 ffor she hir self / wolde al the contree lede 434

¶ Ne ther nas Surryen noon / þat was conuerted
 That of the conseil / of the Sowdan woot
 That he nas al tohewe / er he asterte l
 And Custaunce / han they take anon foot hoot 438
 And in a ship / al sterelees / god woot
 They han hir set and bidde hir lerne Sayle
 Out of Surrye / agaynward to Itaille 441

¶ A certein tresor / that she thider ladde
 And sooth to seyn / vitaille gret plentee
 They han hir yeuen / and clothes eek she hadde
 And forth she sayleth / in the salte see 445
 O my Custaunce / ful of benygnytee
 O Emperours / yonge doghter deere
 He þat is lord of ffortune be thy steere 448

¶ She blisseth hire / and with ful pitous voys
 Vn to the cros of Crist / thus seyde she
 O clere / o weleful Auter / holy croys
 Reed of the lambes blood / ful of pitee 452
 That wesshe the world / fro the olde Iniquitee
 Me fro the feend / and fro his clawes kepe
 That day / þat I shal drenchen in the depe 455

¶ Victorious tree / proteccion of trewe
 That oonly / worthy were for to bere
 The kyng of heuene / with his woundes newe
 The white lamb / that hurt was with a spere 459
 flēmere of feendes / out of hym and here
 On which thy lymes / feithfully extenden
 Me kepe / and yeue me myght my lyf tamenden 462

[Ye]res and dayes / fleet this creature [leaf 118, back]
 Thurgh out the see of Grece / vn to the Strayte
 Of Marrok as it was hir auenture
 O many a sory meel / now may she bayte 466
 After hir deth / ful often may she wayte
 Er þat the wilde wawes / wol hir dryue
 Vn to the place / ther she shal arryue 469

Men myghten axen / why she was noght slayn
 Eek at the feste / who myghte hir body saue
 And I answer / to that demaunde agayn
 Who saued Danyel / in the horrible Caue 473

Ther euery wight saue he / maister and knaue
 Was with the leon frete / er he asterte
 No wight but god / þat he bar in his herte 476

¶ God liste to shewe / his wonderful miracle
 In hire / for we sholde seen / his myghty werkes
 Crist/ which þat is / to euery harm triacle
 By certein menes ofte / as knowen clerkes 480
 Dooth thyng for certein ende / þat ful derk is
 To mannes wit þat for oure ignoraunce
 Ne konne noght knowe / his prudent parueiaunce 483

¶ Now sith she was nat / at the feste yslawe
 Who kepte hire / fro the drenchyng in the see
 Who kepte Ionas / in the fisshes mawe
 Til he / was spowted vp at Nynyuee 487
 Wel may men knowe / it was no wight but hee
 That kepte peple Ebrayk^t / from hir drenchyng^t
 With drye feet^t thurgh out the see passyng^t 490

¶ Who bad / the foure Spiritz of tempest^t
 That power han / tanoyen lond and See
 Bothe North and South / and also west and Est^t
 Anoyeth neither / See / ne land / ne tree 494
 Soothly / the comaundour of that was hee
 That fro the tempest^t ay this womman kepte
 As wel / whan she wook^t as whan she slepte 497

¶ Wher myghte this womman / mete and drynke haue [1019]
 Thre yeer and moore / how lasteth hir vitaille
 Who fedde the Egipcien Marie / in the Caue
 Or in desert / no wight but crist^t sanz faille 501
 fflyue thousand folk^t / it was as greet meruaille
 With lounes fyue / and fishes two to fede
 God sente his foyson / at hir grete nede 504

¶ She dryueth forth / in to oure Occian
 Thurgh out the wilde see / til at the laste
 Vnder an hoold / þat nempnen I ne kan
 ffer in Northumberland / the wawe hir caste 508
 And in the sond / hir shipe stiked so faste
 That thennes wolde it noght of al a tyde
 The wyl of crist was þat she sholde abyde 511

¶ The Constable of the Castel / down is fare
 To seen this wrak' and al the shipe he soghte
 And foond this wery womman ful of care
 He foond also / the tresor þat she broghte 515
 In hir langage / mercy she bisoghte
 The lyf / out of hir body for to twynne
 Hir to deliuere / of wo that she was Inne 518

¶ A manere latyn corrupt was hir speche
 But algates / ther by was she vnderstonde
 The Constable / whan hym liste no lenger seche
 This woful womman / broghte he to the londe 522
 She kneleth down / and thanketh goddes sonde
 But what she was / she wolde no man seye
 ffor foul ne fair / thogh þat she sholde deye 525

¶ She seyde / she was so mazed in the See
 That she forgat hir mynde / by hir trouthe
 The Constable / hath of hire so greet pitee
 And eek his wyf / that they wepten for routhe 529
 She was so diligent with outen slouth
 To serue and plese / euerich in that place
 That alle hir louen / that looken on hir face 532

This Constable / and dame Hermengyld his wyf [leaf 119, back]
 Were payens / and that contree euery where
 But hermengyld / loued hire right as hir lyf
 And Custaunce / hath so longe soiourned there 536

In orisons / with many a bitter teere
 Til Ihesu / hath conuerted thurgh his grace
 Dame hermengyld / Constablesse of thilke place 539

¶ In al that land / no cristen dorste route
 Alle cristen folk / been fled fro that contree
 Thurgh Payens / þat conquereden al aboute
 The plages of the North / by land and see 543
 To Walys / fledde the cristianytee
 Of olde Britons / dwellyng in this Ile
 Ther was hir refut for the mene while 546

¶ But yet nere cristen Britons / so exiled
 That ther nere somme / þat in hir pryuetee
 Honoured crist and hethen folk bigiled
 And neigh the Castel / swiche ther dwelten thre 550
 That oon of hem / was blynd and myghte nat se
 But it were / with thilke eyen of his mynde
 With whiche men seen / after þat they been blynde 553

¶ Bright was the sonne / as in that Someres day
 ffor which the Constable / and his wyf also
 And Custaunce / han ytake the righte way
 Toward the see / a furlong wey / or two 557
 To pleyen / and to romen to and fro
 And in hir walk this blynde man they mette
 Croked and old / with eyen faste yshette 560

¶ In name of Crist cryde this blynde Britoun
 Dame Hermengyld / yif me my sighte agayn
 This lady / weex affrayed of the sown
 Lest þat hir housbonde / shortly for to sayn 564
 Wolde hire / for Ihesu cristes loue han slayn
 Til Custaunce made hir boold / and bad hir wirche
 The wyl of Crist as doghter of his chirche 567

¶ The Constable / weex abasshed of that sight [leaf 126]
 And seide / What amounteth al this fare
 Custaunce answerde / sire it is Cristes myght
 That helpeth folk / out of the feendes snare 571
 And so ferforth / she gan oure lay declare
 That she the Constable / er þat it was eue
 Conuerteth / and on Crist made hym bileue 574

¶ This Constable / was no thyng lord of this place
 Of which I speek ther he Custaunce fond
 But kepte it strongly / many wynter space
 Vnder Alla / kyng of al Northumberlend 578
 That was ful wys / and worthy of his hond
 Agayn the Scottes / as men may wel heere
 But turne I wole / agayn to my matere 581

¶ Sathan / þat euere vs waiteth to bigile
 Saugh of Custaunce / al hir perfecciõ
 And caste anon / how he myghte quite hir while
 And made a yong knyght þat dwelte in that town 585
 Loue hire hote / of foul affeccioun
 That verrailly / hym thoughte he sholde spille
 But he of hire / myghte ones haue his wille 588

¶ He woweth hire / but it auailleth noght
 She wolde do no synne / by no weye
 And for despit he compassed in his thoght
 To maken hire / on shameful deeth to deye 592
 He wayteth / whan the Constable was awaye
 And priuely / vp on a nyght he crepte
 In Hermengildes chambre / whil she slepte 595

¶ Wery for-waked / in hir orisons
 Slepeth Custaunce / and hermengild also
 This knyght thurgh Sathans temptacions
 At softely / is to the bed ygo 599

And kitte the throte / of Hermengild atwo
 And leyde the bloody knyf / by dame Custaunce
 And wente his wey / ther god yeue hym meschaunce 602

[So]one after / cometh this Constable hom agayn [leaf 129, back]
 And eek Alla / that kyng was of that lond
 And saw his wyf / despitously yslayn
 ffor which ful ofte / he weepe and wrong his hond 606
 And in the bed / the bloody knyf he fond
 By dame Custaunce / alas what myghte she seye
 ffor verray wo / hir wit was al aweye 609

¶ To kyng Alla / was told al this meschaunce
 And eek the tyme / and where / and in what wise
 That in a shipe / was founde this Custaunce
 As her biforn / þat ye han herd deuyse 613
 The kynges herte / of pitee gan agryse
 Whan he saw / so benygne a creature
 falle in disese / and in mysaventure 616

¶ ffor as the lomb / toward his deeth is broght
 So stant this Innocent^t bifore the kyng^t
 This false knyght^t þat hath this treson wrought
 Bereth hire on hond / þat she hath doon this thyng^t 620
 But nathelees / ther was greet moornyng^t
 Among the peple / and seyn they kan nat gesse
 That she had doon / so greet a wikkednesse 623

¶ ffor they han seyn hire / euere so vertuous
 And louyng Hermengild / right as hir lyf
 Of this baar witesse / euerich in that hous
 Saue he þat Hermengild / slow with his knyft 627
 This gentil kyng^t hath caught a gret motyf
 Of this witesse / and thoghte he wolde enquere
 Depper in this / a trouthe for to lere 630

¶ Allas Custaunce / thow nast no champion
 Ne fighte kanstow noght^t so weilawey
 But he þat starf / for oure redempcion
 And bond Sathan / and yet lyth ther he lay 634
 So be thy stronge champion this day
 ffor but if Crist / open miracle kythe
 With outen gilt^t thow shalt been slayn as swythe 637

¶ She sette hir down on knees / and thus she sayde [leaf 121]
 Immortal god / that sauedest Susanne
 ffro fals blame / and thow merciful mayde
 Marie I mene / doghter to Seint Anne 641
 Biforn whos child / Aungels synge Osanne
 If I be giltlees / of this felonye
 My socour be / for ellis shal I dye 644

¶ Haue ye nat seyn som tyme / a pale face
 Among a prees / of hym þat hath be lad
 Toward his deeth / wher as hym gat no *grace*
 And swich a colour / in his face hath had 648
 Men myghte knowe his face / þat was bistad
 Amonges alle the faces / in that route
 So stant Custance / and looketh hire aboute 651

¶ O Queenes / lyuyng in prosperitee
 Duchesses / and ye ladies euerichon
 Haueth som reuthe / on hir aduersitee
 An Emperours doghter / stant allone 655
 She hath no wight^t / to whom to make hir mone
 O blood roial / that stondest in this drede
 ffer be thy freendes / at thy grete nede 658

¶ This Alla kyng^t hath swich compassioun
 As gentil herte / is fulfild of pitee
 That from his eyen / ran the water down
 Now hastily / do fecche a book / quod he 662

And if this knyght^t. wol sweren how þat she
 This womman slow / yet wol we vs auyse
 Whom þat we wole / that shal been oure Iustise 665

A Briton book^t writen with Euaungiles
 Was fet^t and on this book he swoor anon
 She gilty was / and in the mene whiles
 An hand hym smoot^t vp on the nekke bon 669
 That down he fel / atones / as a stoon
 And bothe hise eyen / broste out of his face
 In sighte / of euery body in that place 672

[A vo]ys was herd / in general audience [leaf 121, back]
 And seyde / thow hast disclaundred giltles
 The doghter of holy chirche / in heigh presence
 Thus hastow doon / and yet I holde my pees 676
 Of this meruaille / agast was al the prees
 As mazed folk / they stoden euerychone
 ffor drede of wreche / saue Custance allone 679

¶ Greet was the drede / and eek the repentaunce
 Of hem / þat hadden wrong suspicioñ
 Vp on / this sely Innocent Custaunce
 And for this miracle / in conclusioñ 683
 And by Custaunces mediacioñ
 The kyng^t and many another in that place
 Conuerted was / thanked be Cristes grace 686

¶ This false knyght was slayn for his vntrouthe
 By Iuggement of Alla hastily
 And yet Custaunce / hadde of his deeth greet routhe
 And after this / Ihesus of his mercy 690
 Made Alla / wedden ful solempnely
 This holy mayden / þat is so bright and shene
 And thus hath Crist^t maad Custance a queene 693

¶ But who was woful / if I shal nat lye
 Of this weddyng^t but Donegild and namo
 The kynges moder / ful of tirannye
 Hir thoughte / hir cursed herte brast atwo 697
 She wolde noght^t hir sone had doon so
 Hir thoughte a despit^t þat he sholde take
 So straunge a creature / vn to his make 700

¶ Me list nat^t of the chaf / ne of the stree
 Maken so long a tale / as of the corn
 What sholde I tellen / of the realtee
 At mariages / or which cours gooth biforn 704
 Who bloweth in trompe / or in an horn
 The fruyt of euery tale / is for to seye
 They ete and drynke / and daunce / & synge & pleye 707

¶ They goon to bedde as it was skile and right^t [leaf 122]
 ffor though þat wyues / been ful holy thynges
 They moste take / in pacience at nyght^t
 Swich manere necessities / as been plesynges 711
 To folk / that han ywedded hem with rynges
 And laye a lite / hir holynesse asyde
 As for the tyme / it may noon oother bityde 714

¶ On hire / he gat a knaue child anon
 And to a bisshope / and his Constable eke
 He took his wyf to kepe / whan he is gon
 To Scotlandward / his foomen for to seke 718
 Now faire Custaunce / þat is so humble & meke
 So longe is goon with childe / til þat stille
 She halt hir chambre / abidyng^t cristes wille 721

¶ The tyme is come / a knaue child she beer
 Mauricius at the font stoon / they hym calle
 This Constable / dooth forth come a Messenger
 And wroot vn to his kyng^t þat clepyd was Alle 725

How þat / this blisful tidynge is bifalle
 And othere tidynge / speedful for to seye
 He tath the lettre / and forth he goth his weye 728

¶ This Messenger / to doon his auauntage
 Vn to the kynges moder / rideth swithe
 And salueth ful faire / in his langage
 Ma dame quod he / ye may be glad and blithe 732
 And thanketh god / an hundred thousand sithe
 My lady queene / hath child with outen doute
 To ioye and blisse / of al this regne aboute 735

¶ Lo here the lettres / seled of this thyngt
 That I moot bere / with al the haste I may
 If ye wol aught vn to youre sone the kyngt
 I am youre seruauent bothe nyght and day 739
 Donegild answerde / as now at this tyme nay
 But here al nyght I wol thow take thy reste
 To morwe / wol I seye thee what me leste 742

[Thi]s Messenger / drank sadly ale and wyn [leaf 122, back]
 And stolen were / his lettres pryuely
 Out of his box / whil he sleep as a swyn
 And countrefeted / was ful subtilly 746
 Another lettre / wrought ful synfully
 Vn to the kyng direct of this matere
 ffro his Constable / as ye shal after heere 749

¶ The lettre spak / the queene deliuered was
 Of so horrible / a fendlich creature
 That in the Castel / noon so hardy was
 That any while / dorste ther endure 753
 The moder was an Elf / by auenture
 Ycomen / by charmes / or by sorcerye
 And euerich / hateth hir compaignye 756

¶ Wo was this kyng^t whan he this lettre hadde seyn
 But to no wight^t he tolde his sorwes soore
 But of his owene hond / he wroot ageyn
 Welcome the sonde of Crist / for euere moore 760
 To me / þat am now lerned in his loore
 Lord / welcome be thy lust^t and thy plesaunce
 My lust^t I putte al in thyn ordinaunce 763

¶ Kepeth this child / al be it foul or feir
 And eek my wyf / vn to myn hom comynge
 Crist whan hym list^t may sende me an heir
 Moore agreable than this / to my likynge 767
 This lettre he seleth / pryuely wepynge
 Which to the Messenger / was take soone
 And forth he goth / ther is namoore to doone 770

¶ O Messenger / fulfild of dronkenesse [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Strong is thy breeth / thy lymes faltren ay
 And thow biwreyst^t al secrenesse
 The mynde is lorn / thow ianglest as a Iay 774
 Thy face is turned / in a newe array
 Ther dronkenesse regneth / in any route
 Ther is no conseil hid / with outen doute 777

¶ O Donegild / I ne haue noon englissh digne [leaf 122:]
 Vn to thy malice / and thy tirannye
 And ther fore / to the feend I thee resigne
 Lat hym enditen / of thy traitorie 781
 ffy mannyssh fy / o nay by god I lye
 ffy fendlich spirit^t for I dar wel telle
 Thogh thow heere walke / thy spirit is in helle 784

¶ This Messenger / comth fro the kyng agayn
 And at the kynges modres Court he lighte
 And she was / of this Messenger ful fayn
 And plesed hym / in al that euere she myghte 788

He drank / and wel his girdel vnder pighte
 He slepeth / and he fnorteth in his gyse
 Al nyght til the sonne gan aryse 791

¶ Eft were his *lettres* / stolen euerichon
 And countrefeted *lettres* / in this wyse
 The kyng comaundeth / his Constable anon
 Vp peyne of hangyng^t and on heigh Iuyse 795
 That he ne sholde suffren / in no wyse
 Custance / in with his regne for tabyde
 Thre dayes / and a quarter of o tyde 798

¶ But in the same Shipec / as he hir fond
 Hire and hir yonge sone / and al hir geere
 He sholde putte / and crowde hir fro the lond
 And charge hire / *þat* she neuere eft coome there 802
 O my Custaunce / wel may thy goost haue fere
 And slepyng in thy dreem / been in penaunce
 Whan Donegild / caste al this ordinaunce 805

¶ This Messenger / on morwe whan he wook^t
 Vn to the Castel / halt the nexte wey
 And to the Constable / he the *lettre* took^t
 And whan *þat* he / this pitous *lettre* sey 809
 fful ofte / he seyde *allas* and *weilawey*
 Lord crist quod he / how may this worl endure
 So ful of synne / is many a creature, 812

[O] myghty god / if that it be thy wille [leaf 123, back]
 Sith thou art rightful Iuge / how may it be
 That thou wolt suffren / Innocentz to spille
 And wikked folk / regnen in *prosperitee* 816
 O goode Custaunce / *allas* so wo is me
 That I moot be thy tormentour / or deye
 On shames deeth / ther nys noon oother weye 819

¶ Wepen bothe yonge and olde / in al that place
 Whan þat the kyng^t this cursed lettre sente
 And Custance / with a dedly pale face
 The ferthe day / toward hir shipe she wente 823
 But nathelees / she taketh in good entente
 The wyl of Crist / and knelyng on the Stronde
 She seyde lord / ay wel come be thy sonde 826

¶ He þat me kepte / fro the false blame
 Whil I was on the lond / amonges yow
 He kan me kepe / fro harm and eek fro shame
 In salte see / al thogh I se noght how 830
 As strong as euere he was / he is yet now
 In hym triste I / and in his moder deere
 That is to me / my Sayl and eek my steere 833

¶ Hir litel child / lay wepyng in hir arm
 And knelyng^t pitously to hym she seyde
 Pees litel sone / I wol do thee noon harm
 With that hir couerchief^t / ouer hir hed she breyde 837
 And ouer his litel eyen / she it leyde
 And in hir arm / she lulleth it ful faste
 And in to heuene / hir eyen vp she caste 840

¶ Moder quod she / and mayden bright Marie
 Sooth is / þat thurgh wommans eggement^t
 Mankynde was lorn / and dampned ay to dye
 ffor which thy child / was on a croys yrent^t 844
 Thy blisful eyen / sawe al his torment^t
 Thanne is ther / no comparison bitwene
 Thy wo / and any wo man may sustene 847

¶ Thow saw thy child / yslayn bifor thyne eyen [leaf 124]
 And yet now / lyueth my litel child parfay
 Now lady bright to whom alle woful cryen
 Thow glorie of wommanhod / thow faire may 851

Thow hauen of refut' brighte sterre of day
 Rewe on my child / that of thy gentillesse
 Rewest' on euery rewful in distresse 854

¶ O litel child / allas what is thy gilt'
 That neuere wroghtest synne / as yet pardee
 Why wil thyn harde fader / han thee spilt'
 O mercy deere Constable / quod she 858
 As lat my litel child / dwelle here with thee
 And if thow darst noght' sauen hym for blame
 So kys hym ones / in his fader name 861

¶ Ther with she looketh / bakward to the londe
 And seyde / fare wel housbonde routhlees
 And vp she rist' and walketh doun the Stronde
 Toward the shipe / hir folweth al the prees 865
 And euere / she preyeth hir child / to holde his pees
 And taketh hir leue / and with an holy entente
 She blesseth hire / and in to shipe she wente 868

¶ Vitailled was the shipe / it is no drede
 Habundantly for hire / ful longe space
 And othere necessities / þat sholde nede
 She hadde ynow / heryed be goddes grace 872
 ffor wynd and weder / almyghty god purchace
 And brynge hir hom / I kan no bettre seye
 But in the see / she dryueth forth hir weye 875

[PART III.]

¶ Alla the kyng' comth hom soone after this
 Vn to his Castel / of the which I tolde
 And axeth / where his wyf / and his child is
 The Constable / gan aboute his herte colde 879

And pleynty / al the manere he hym tolde
 As ye han herd / I kan telle it no better
 And sheweth the kyng^e his seel and his lettre 882

[A]nd seyde lord / as ye comaunded me [leaf 124, back]
 Vp payne of deeth / so haue I do *certein*
 This Messenger / tormented was / til he
 Moste biknowe / and tellen plat and pleyn 886
 ffor nyght to nyght in what place he had leyn
 And thus by wit and subtil enquerynge
 Ymaged was / by whom this harm gan sprynge 889

¶ The hond was knowe / þat the lettre wroot
 And al the venym / of this cursed dede
 But in what wise / *certeynly* I noot
 Theffect is this / þat Alla out of drede 893
 His moder slow / that may men pleynly rede
 ffor that she traytour was / to hir ligeaunce
 Thus endeth olde Donegild with meschaunce 896

¶ The sorwe þat this Alla / nyght and day
 Maketh for his wyf / and for his child also
 Ther is no tonge / that it telle may
 But now wol I / vn to Custaunce go 900
 That fleteth in the See / in payne and wo
 ffyue yer and moore / as liked Cristes sonde
 Er þat hir shipe / approached vn to londe 903

¶ Vnder an hethen Castel / atte laste
 Of which the name / in my text noght I fynde
 Custaunce and eek hir child / the see vp caste
 Almyghty god / that saueth al mankynde 907
 Haue on Custaunce / and on hir child som mynde
 That fallen is / in hethen hand eft soone
 In point to spille / as I shal telle yow soone 910

¶ Down fro the Castel / comth ther many a' wight^t
 To gauren on this Shipe / and on Custaunce
 But shortly from the Castel / on a nyght^t
 The lordes Styward / god yeue hym meschaunce 914
 A theef / that hadde reneyed oure creaunce
 Cam in to shipe allone / and seyde he sholde
 Hir lemman be / wher so she wolde or nolde 917

¶ Wo was this wrecched womman tho bigon [leaf 125]
 Hir child cryde / and she cryde pitously
 But blisful Marie / heelp hire right anon
 ffor with hir strogelyng^t wel and myghtily 921
 The theef / fil ouer bord / al sodeynly
 And in the see / he dreynte for vengeaunce
 And thus hath Crist^t vnwemmed kept Custaunce 924

¶ O foule lust of luxurie / lo thyn ende [Latin note, p. 133.]
 Nat oonly / þat thou fayntest mannes mynde
 But verraily / thow wolt his body shende
 Thende of thy werk / or of thy lustes blynde 928
 Is compleynyng^t how many oon may men fynde
 That noght for werk^t som tyme / but for thentente
 To doon this synne / been outhur slayn or shente 931

¶ How may this wayke womman / han this strengthe
 Hir to defende / agayn this renegat^t
 O. Goliass / vnmesurable of lengthe
 How myghte dauid / make thee so maat 935
 So yong^t and of armure so desolat^t
 How dorste he looke / vp on thy dredful face
 Wel may men seen / it was but goddes grace 938

¶ Who yaf Iudith / corage / or hardynesse
 To sleen hym Olofernus / in his tente
 And to deliueren / out of wrecchednesse
 The peple of god / I sey for this entente 942

That right as god / spirit of vigour sente
 To hem / and saued hem / out of meschaunce
 So sente he myght and vigour to Custaunce 945

¶ fforth gooth hir shipe / thurgh out the narwe mouth
 Of Iubaltare / and Septe / dryuyng ay
 Som tyme West and som tyme North and South
 And som tyme Est ful many a wery day 949
 Til Cristes moder / blissed be she ay
 Hath shapen / thurgh hir endelees goodnesse
 To make an ende / of al hir heuynesse 952

[N]ow lat vs stynte of Custaunce / but a throwe [leaf 125, bk]
 And speke we / of the Romain Emperour
 That out of Surrye / hath by lettres knowe
 The slaughtre of cristen folk / and dishonour 956
 Doon to his doghter / by a fals traytour
 I mene / the cursed wikked Sowdanesse
 That at the feeste / leet sleen bothe moore and lesse 959

¶ ffor which this Emperour / hath sent anon
 His Senatour / with Roial ordinaunce
 And othere lordes / god woot many oon
 On Surryens / to taken heigh vengeance 963
 They brennen / sleen / and brynge hem to meschaunce
 fful many a day / but shortly this is thende
 Homward to Rome / they shapen hem to wende 966

¶ This senatour / repaireth with Victorie
 To Romeward / saylynge ful Roially
 And mette the ship dryuyng / as seith the stori
 In which Custaunce / sit ful pitously 970
 No thyng ne knew he / what she was / ne why
 She was in swich array / ne she nyl seye
 Of hir estaat thogh she sholde deye 973

¶ He bryngeth hire to Rome / and to his wyf
 He yaf hire / and hir yonge sone also
 And with the Senatour / she ladde hir lyf
 Thus kan oure lady / bryngen out of wo Maria mater omnium virtu-
tum. [in a late hand]
 Woful Custaunce / and many another mo
 And longe tyme / dwelled she in that place
 In holy werkes euere / as was hir grace R Wryne 980
[in the same late hand]

¶ The senatours wyf / hir Aunte was
 But for al that she knew hir neuer the moore
 I wol no lenger / taryen in this cas
 But to kyng Alla / which I spak of yooore 984
 That for his wyf / wepeth and siketh soore
 I wol retourne / and lete I wole Custaunce
 Vnder the Senatours gouernaunce 987

¶ Kyng Alla / which þat hadde his moder slayn [leaf 126]
 Vp on a day / fil in swich repentaunce
 That if I shortly / tellen shal and playn
 To Rome he cometh / to receyuen his penaunce 991
 And putte hym / in the Popes ordinaunce
 In heigh and logh / and Ihesu Crist bisoghte
 fforyeue / his wikked werkes þat he wroghte 994

¶ The fame anon / thurgh Rome town is born
 How Alla kyng^s shal comen in pilgrymage
 By herbergeours / that wenten hym biforn
 ffor which the Senatour / as was vsage 998
 Rood hym agayns / and many of his lynage
 As wel to shewen / his heighe magnyficence
 As to doon / any kyng a reuerence 1001

¶ Greet cheere / doth this noble Senatour
 To kyng Alla / and he to hym also
 Euerich of hem / dooth oother greet honour
 And so bifel / þat in a day / or two 1005

This Senatour / is to kyng Alla go
 To feste / and shortly / if I shal nat lye
 Custaunces sone / wente in his compaignye 1008

¶ Som men wolde seyn / at requeste of Custaunce
 This Senatour / hath lad this child to feste
 I may nat tellen / euerich circumstaunce
 Be as be may / ther was he atte leste 1012
 But sooth is this / þat at his modres heste
 Biforn Alla / duryng' the metes space
 The child stood / lookynge in the kynges face 1015

¶ This Alla kyng' hath of this child greet wonder
 And to the Senatour / he seyde anon
 Whos is that faire child / that stondeth yonder
 I noot quod he / by god and by Seint Iohn 1019
 A moder he hath / but fader hath he non
 That I of woot / and shortly in a stounde
 He tolde Alla / how þat this child was founde 1022

[Bu]t god woot quod this Senatour also [leaf 126, back.]
 So vertuous a lyuere / in my lyf
 Ne saw I neuere as she / ne herde of mo
 Of worldly wommen / mayde ne of wyf 1026
 I dar wel seyn / hir hadde leuere a knyf
 Thurgh out hir brest / than been a womman wikke
 Ther is no man / koude brynge hire to that prikke 1029

¶ Now was this child / as lyk' vn to Custaunce
 As possible is / a creature to be
 This Alla / hath the face in remembraunce
 Of dame Custaunce / and ther on mused he 1033
 If þat the childes moder / were aught she
 That is his wyf / and pryuely he sighte
 And spedde hym fro the table that he myghte 1036

¶ Parfay thoughte he / fantome is in myn heed
 I oghte deme / of skilful Iugement
 That in the salte see / my wif is deed
 And afterward / he made his argument 1040
 What woot I / if þat Crist hath hider sent
 My wif by see / as wel as he hir sente
 To my contree / from thennes þat she wente 1043

¶ And after noon / hom with the Senatour
 Goth Alla / for to seen this wonder chaunce
 This Senatour / dooth Alla greet honour
 And hastily / he sente after Custaunce 1047
 But tristeth wel / hir liste noght to daunce
 Whan that she wiste / wher fore was that sonde
 Vnnethe / vp on hir feet she myghte stonde 1050

¶ Whan Alla saugh his wyf / faire he hir grette
 And weepe / that it was routhe for to se
 ffor at the firste look / he on hir sette
 He knew wel verrailly / þat it was she 1054
 And she for sorwe / as domb stant as a tree
 So was hir herte shet in hir distresse
 Whan she remembred / his vnkyndenesse 1057

¶ Twies she swowneth / in his owene sighte [leaf 127]
 He weepe / and hym excuseth pitously
 Now god quod he / and his halwes brighte
 So wisly on my soule / as haue mercy 1061
 That of youre harm / as giltles am I.
 As is Maurice my sone / so lyk youre face
 Ellis the feend / me fecche out of this place 1064

¶ Long was the sobbyng and the bitter peyne
 Er þat / hir woful hertes myghte cesse
 Greet was the pitee / for to heere hem pleyne
 Thurgh whiche pleintes / gan hir wo encesse 1068

I pray yow / al my labour to relese
 I may nat telle hir wo / vn til to morwe
 I am so wery / for to speke of sorwe 1071

¶ But finally / whan þat the sooth is wist/
 That Alla / gitlees was of hir wo
 I trowe / an hundred tymes been they kist'
 And swich a blisse / is ther bitwix hem two 1075
 That saue the ioie / þat lasteth eueremo
 Ther is noon lyk / þat any creature
 Hath seyn / or shal / whil þat the world may dure 1078

¶ Tho preyde she / hir housbond mekely
 In relief / of hir longe pitous pyne
 That he wolde praye / hir fader specially
 That of his magestee / he wolde enclyne 1082
 To vouche sauf / som day with hym to dyne
 She preyde hym eek' he sholde by no weye
 Vn to hir fader / no word of hir seye 1085

¶ Som men wolde seyn / how þat the child Mauryce
 Dooth this message / vn to this Emperour
 But as I gesse / Alla was noght so nyce
 To hym þat was / of so souereyn honour 1089
 As he þat is / of cristen folk the flour
 Sente any child / but it is bet to deme
 He wente hym self and so it may wel seme 1092

[Thi]s Emperour / hath graunted gentilly [leaf 127, back]
 To come to dyner / as he hym bisoghte
 And wel rede I / he looked bisily
 Vp on this child / and on his doghter thoghte 1096
 Alla gooth to his In / and as hym oghte
 Arrayed for this feste in euery wise
 As ferforth / as his konnyng may suffise 1099

¶ The morwe cam / and Alla gan hym dresse
 And eek his wyf / this Emperour to meete
 And forth they ryde / in Ioye and in gladnesse
 And whan she say / hir fader in the Streete 1103
 She lighte down / and falleth hym to feete
 ffader quod she / youre yonge child Custaunce
 Is now ful clene / out of youre remembraunce 1106

¶ I am youre doghter Custance / quod she
 That whilom ye han sent / vn to Surrye
 It am I fader / that in the salte See
 Was put allone / and dampned for to dye 1110
 Now goode fader / mercy I yow crye
 Seend me namoore / vn to noon hethenesse
 But thonke my lord heere / of his kyndenesse 1113

¶ Who kan the pitous Ioye / tellen al
 Bitwix hem thre / syn they be thus ymette
 But of my tale / make an ende I shal
 The day goth faste / I wol no lenger lette 1117
 This glade folk to dyner they hem sette
 In ioye and blisse / at mete I lete hem dwelle
 A thousand fold / wel moore than I kan telle 1120

¶ This child Maurice / was sithen Emperour
 Maad by the Pope / and lyued cristenly
 To cistes chirche / he dide greet honour
 But I lete / al this storie passen by 1124
 Of Custaunce / is my tale specially
 In the olde Romain gestes / may men fynde
 Maurices lyf / I bere it noght in mynde 1127

¶ This kyng Alla / whan he his tyme say [leaf 128]
 With his Custaunce / his holy wif so swete
 To Engeland / been they com the righte way
 Wher as they lyue / in ioye and in quiete 1131

But litel while it lasteth I yow heete [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
 Ioye of this world / for tyme wol nat abyde
 ffor day to nyght it chaungeth as the tyde 1134

¶ Who lyued euere / in swich delit / a day
 That hym ne moeued / outhur Conscience [*Latin note*, p. 133.]
 Or Ire / or talent or som kyn affray
 Enuye / or pryde / or passion / or offence 1138
 I ne seye / but for this ende this sentence
 That litel while / in ioye / or in plesaunce
 Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custaunce 1141

¶ ffor deeth that taketh / of heigh and logh his rente
 Whan passed was a yeer / euene as I gesse
 Out of this world / this kyng Alla he hente
 ffor whom Custaunce / hath ful greet heuynesse 1145
 Now lat vs prayen god / his soule blesse
 And dame Custance / fynally to seye
 Toward the town of Rome / gooth hir weye 1148

¶ To Rome is come / this holy creature
 And fyndeth hir freendss / hoole and sownde
 Now is she scaped / al hir auenture
 And whan that she / hir fader hath yfownde 1152
 Doun on hir knees / falleth she to grownd
 Wepyng for tendrenesse / in herte blythe
 She herieth god / an hondred thousand sythe 1155

¶ In vertue / and holy almes-dede
 They lyuen alle / and neuere asonder wende
 Til deeth departeth hem / this lyf they lede
 And fareth now wel / my tale is at an ende 1159
 Now Ihesu crist that of his myght may sende
 Ioye after wo / gouerne vs in his grace
 And kepe vs alle / that been in this place Amen. 1162

¶ Here is ended / the tale / of the man of Lawe.

¶ Here bigynneth / the Squiers tale 𐀓

[leaf 129]

AT Sarray / in the land of Tartarye
 Ther dwelte a kyng^t that werreyed Russye
 Thurgh which / ther deyde many a doghty man
 This noble kyng^t was clepid kambynskan¹ [1 ? MS kambyuskan]
 Which in his tyme / was of so greet renoun
 That ther nas nowher in no Regioun
 So excellent a lord / in alle thyng^t
 Hym lakked noght^t þat longed to a kyng^t 16
 As of the secte / of which þat he was born
 He kepte his lay / to which þat he was sworn
 And ther to / he was hardy / wys / and riche
 Pietous and Iust^t and euere moore yliche 20
 Sooth of his word / benigne and honourable
 Of his corage / as any Centre stable ¶ Centrum circuli.
 Yong^t fressh / and strong^t in armes desirous
 As any Bachiler / of al his hous 24
 A fair persone he was / and fortunat^t
 And kepte alwey / so wel Roial estat^t
 That ther nas no wher / swich another man
 ¶ This noble kyng / this Tartre Cambynskan 28
 Hadde two sones / on Elfeta his wyf^t
 Of whiche / the eldeste highte Algarsyf/
 That oother sone / was clepid Cambalo
 A doghter hadde / this worthy kyng also 32
 That yongest^t was / and highte Canacee
 But for to telle yow / al hir beautee
 It lyth nat in my tonge / nyn my konnyng^t
 I dar nat vndertake / so heigh a thyng^t 36

Myn englyssh eek / is insufficient
 It moste been / a Rethor excellent
 That koude his colours / longyng^t for that Art
 If he sholde hire / discryuen euery part 40
 I am noon swich / I moot speke as I kan
 And so bifel / that whan this kambynskan
 Hath .xx. wynter / born his dyademe
 As he was wont^t fro yeer to yeer I deme 44
 [He leet¹] the feste / of his Natiuitee ^[¹ Rats. leaf 129, back]
 [¹Do]n crien / thurgh out Sarray his Citee
 The laste Idus of March / after the yeer
 Phebus the sonne / ful iolyf was and cleer 48
 ffor he was ny his exaltacion
 In Martes face / and his mansion
 In Aries / the Coleryk hote signe
 fful lusty was the weder / and benygne 52
 ffor which the foweles / agayn the sonne shene
 What for the sesoñ / and the yonge grene
 fful loude songen / hir affeccions
 Hem semed / han geten hem proteccions 56
 Agayn the swerd of wynter / kene and cold
 ¶ This Cambynskan / of which I haue yow told
 In Roial vestymen^t sit on his deys
 With dyademe / ful hye in his paleys 60
 And halt his feste / solempne and so riche
 That in this world / ne was ther noon it liche
 Of which / if I shal tellen al tharray
 Thanne wolde it ocupie / a someres day 64
 And eek^t it nedeth nat / to deuyse
 At euery cours / the ordre of hir seruyse
 I wol nat tellen / of hir straunge sewes
 Ne of her swannes / ne of hir heron^ð sewes 68
 Eek in that land / as tellen knyghtes olde
 Ther is som mete / þat is ful deyntee holde
 That in this land / men recche of it but smal
 Ther nys no man / þat may reporten al 72

I wol nat tarien yow / for it is pryne	
And for it is no fruyt but los of tyme	
Vn to my firste / I wol haue my recours	
¶ And so bifel / þat after the thridde Cours	76
Whil þat this kyng sit thus / in his nobleye	
Herkyng his Mynstrals / hir thynges pleye	
Biforn hym at the bord / deliciously	
In at the halle dore / al sodeynly	80
Ther cam a knyght vp on a Steede of bras	
And in his hand / a brood Mirour of glas	
Vp on his thombe / he hadde / of gold a ryng	
And by his syde / a naked swerd hangyng	84
And vp he rydeth / to the heighe bord	[leaf 130]
In al the halle / ne was ther spoke a word	
ffor merueille of this knyght hym to biholde	
fful bisily / they wayten / yonge and olde	88
¶ This straunge knyght that cam thus sodeynly	
Al armed saue his heed / ful richely	
Salueth kyng and queene / and lordes alle	
By ordre / as they seten in the halle	92
With so heigh reuerence / and obeisañces	
As wel in his speche / as in his contenañces	
That Gawayn / with his olde curteisye	
Thogh he were come agayn / out of ffairye	96
Ne koude hym nat amende / with a word	
And after this / biforn the hye bord	
He with a manly voys / seyde his message	
After the forme / vsed in his langage	100
With outen vice / of silable / or of lettre	
And for his tale / sholde seme the bettre	
Acordant to his wordes / was his cheere	
As techeth art of speche / hem þat it leere	104
Al be / þat I kan nat sowne / his style	
Ne kan nat clymben / ouer so heigh a style	
Yet seye I this / þat as to commune entente	
Thus muche amounteth / al that euere he mente	108

If it so be / þat I haue it in my mynde
 ¶ He seyde / the kyng of Arabe / and of Inde
 My lige lord / on this solempne day
 Salueth yow / as he best kan and may 112
 And sendeth yow / in honour of youre feste
 By me / that am al redy / at youre heste
 This Steede of bras / that esily and weel
 Kan in the space / of o day naturel 116
 This is to seyn / in .xxiiij. houres
 Wher so yow list / in droghte / or ellis shoures
 Beren youre body / in to euery place
 To which youre herte / wilneth for to pace 120
 With outen wem of yow / thurgh foul or fair
 Or if yow list to flee as hye in the Ayre
 As dooth an Egle / whan hym list to soore
 This same Steede / shal bere yow euere moore 124
 [With¹] outen harm / til ye be ther yow leste [¹ *Rats.* 1f 130, bk]
 [Th]ough þat ye slepen / on his bak / or reste
 And turne agayn / with writhyng of a pyn
 He þat it wroghte / koude many a gyn 128
 He wayted / many a constellacioñ
 Er he hadde doon / this operacioñ
 And knew ful many a seel / and many a bond
 ¶ This Mirour eek / that I haue in myn hond 132
 Hath swich a myght þat men may in it see
 Whan ther shal fallen / any aduersitee
 Vn to youre regne / or to your sel also
 And openly / who is youre freend / or fo 136
 ¶ And ouer al this / if any lady bright
 Hath set hir herte / on any maner wight
 If he be fals / she shal his trayson see
 His newe loue / and al his subtiltee 140
 So openly / þat ther shal no thyng hyde
 Wher fore / agayn this lusty Someres tyde
 This Mirour and this ryng / þat ye may see
 He hath sent to my lady Canacee 144

Youre excellent^{hie} doghter/ þat is heere
 ¶ The vertu of the ryng^{audie} if ye wol heere
 Is this / þat if hir list it for to were
 Vp on hir thombe / or in hir purs it bere 148
 Ther nys no fowel / þat fleeth vnder the heuene
 That she ne shal wel / vnderstonde his steuene
 And knowe his menyng^{audie} openly and pleyne
 And answe^{audie}re hym / in his langage ageyn 152
 And euery gras / þat groweth vp on roote
 She shal eek knowe / and whom it wol doon boote
 Al be his woundes / neuer so depe and wyde
 ¶ This naked swerd / þat hangeth by my syde 156
 Swich vertu hath / þat what man so ye smyte
 Thurgh out his armure / it wol kerue and byte
 Were it as thikke / as is a braunched ook^{audie}
 And what man / þat is wounded with the Strook^{audie} 160
 Shal neuere be hool / til þat yow lust of grace
 To stroke hym with the platte / in thilke place
 Ther he is hurt^{audie} this is as mucche to seyn
 Ye moote / with the platte swerd ageyn 164
 Stroke hym in the wounde / and it wol close [leaf 131]
 This is a verray sooth / with outen glose
 It failleth nat^{audie} / whiles it is in youre hold
 And whan this knyght^{audie} hath thus his tale ytold 168
 He rideth out of halle / and doun he lighte
 ¶ His Steede which þat shoon / as sonne bryghte
 Stant in the Court^{audie} stille as any stoon
 This knyght^{audie} is to his chambre lad anon 172
 And is vnarmed / and to mete yset^{audie}
 The presentz / been ful realliche yfet^{audie}
 This is to seyn / the swerd and the Mirour
 And born anon / in to the heighe tour 176
 With certein Officers / ordeyned ther fore
 And vn to Canacee / the ryng is bore
 Solempnely / ther she sit^{audie} at the table
 But sikerly / with outen any fable 180

The hors of bras / þat may nat been renewed
 It stant^t as it were / to the ground yglewed
 Ther may no man / out of the place it dryue
 ffor noon engyn / of wyndas or polyue 184
 And cause why / for they kan nat the craft
 And ther fore / in the place / they han it laft^t
 Til þat the knyght^t hath taught hem the manere
 To voyden hym / as ye shal after heere 188
 ¶ Greet was the prees / that swarmeth to and fro
 To gauren on this hors / that stondeth so
 ffor it so heigh was / and so brood and long^t
 So wel proporcioned / for to ben strong^t 192
 Right as it were / a Steede of lumbardye
 Ther-with so horsly / and so quyk of eye
 As it a gentil Poyleys courser weere
 ffor *certes* / fro his tayl / vn to his eere 196
 Nature / ne art^t ne koude hym nat amende
 In no degree / as al the peple wende
 ¶ But euere moore / hir mooste wonder was
 How þat it koude goon / and was of bras 200
 It was a ffairye / as the peple semed
 Dyuerse folk / dyuersely han demed
 As many heuedes / as many wittes ther been
 They murmured / as dooth a swarm of been 204
 [And¹] maden skiles / after hir fantasies [*Rats.* leaf 131, back]
 Rehersynge / of thise olde Poetries
 And seyden / it was lyk the Pegasee .i. equus Pegaseus.
 The hors / þat hadde wynges for to flee 208
 Or ellis it was / the Grekys hors Synoñ
 That broghte Troye / to destruccioñ
 As men / in thise olde gestes rede
 ¶ Myn herte quod oon / is euere moore in drede 212
 I trowe / som men of armes been ther Inne
 That shapen hem / this Citee for to wynne
 It were right good / þat al swich thyng were knowe
 ¶ Another rowned / to his felawe lowe 216

And seyde he lyeth / for it is rather lyk^t
 An apparence / ymaad by som magyk^t
 As Iogelours pleyen / at thise festes grete
 Of sondry doutes / thus they iangle and trete 220
 As lewed peple / demeth comunly
 Of thynges / þat been moore maad subtilly
 Than they kan / in hir lewednesse comprehende
 They demen gladly / to the badder ende 224
 ¶ And somme of hem / wondren on the Mirour
 That born was vp / vn to the maister tour
 How men myghte in it / swiche thynges se
 ¶ Another answerde / and seyde it myghte wel be 228
 Naturelly / by composicions /
 Of anglis / and of sly reflexions
 And seiden / þat in Rome was swich oon
 They speke of Alocen / and Vitulon 232
 Of Aristotle / þat writen in hir lyues
 Of queynte Mirours / and of perspectyues
 As knowen they / þat han hir bookes herd
 ¶ And oother folk / han wondred on the swerd 236
 That wolde percen / thurgh out euery thyng^t
 And fille in speche / of Thelophus the kyng^t
 And of Achilles / for his queynte spere
 ffor he koude with it / bothe heele and dere 240
 Right in swich wise / as men may / with the swerd
 Of which right now / ye han your seluen herd
 ¶ They speeke / of sondry hardyng of metal
 And speke of medicynes / ther with al 244
 And how / and whanne / it sholde yharded be [leaf 132]
 Which is vnknowe / algates vn to me
 ¶ Tho speeke they / of Canacees ryng^t
 And seyden alle / þat swich a wonder thyng^t 248
 Of craft of rynges / herde they neuere non
 Saue þat he Moyses / and kyng Salomon
 Hadde a name of konnyng^t in swich art^t
 Thus seyn the peple / and drawn hem a part^t 252

- ¶ But nathelees / *somme* seyden þat it was
 Wonder / to maken of fern asshen glas
 And yet is glas / nat lyk asshen of fern
 But for they han / knowen it so fern 256
 Therefore / cesseth hir Ianglyng and hir wonder
- ¶ As soore wondren *somme* / on cause of thonder
 On ebbe and flood / on gossomer / and on myst'
 And alle thyng^t til þat the cause is wist' 260
 Thus Ianglen they / and demen and deuyse
 Til that the kyng^t gan fro the bord aryse
- ¶ Phebus hath laft' the angle Meridional
 And yet' ascendyng is / the beest roial 264
 The gentil leon / with his Aldiran
 Whan þat this tartre kyng Cambynskan
 Roos fro his bord / ther as he sat ful hye
 Biforn hym gooth / the loude Mynstraleye 268
 Til he cam / to his chambre of parementz
 There as ther sownen / diuerse Instrumentz
 That it is lyk^t / an heuene for to heere
 Now dauncen / lusty Venus children deere 272
 ffor in the fissh / hir lady sat ful hye
 And looketh on hem / with a freendly eye
- ¶ This noble kyng^t is set vp on his trone
 This straunge knyght^t is fet to hym ful soone 276
 And on the daunce he gooth / with Canacee
 Here is / the reuel / and the Iolitee
 That is nat able / a dul man to deuyse
 He moste han knowe / loue and his seruyse 280
 And been a festlich man / as fressh as May
 That sholde yow deuysen / swich array
- ¶ Who koude telle yow / the forme daunces
 So vnkouth / and swiche fresshe contenaunces 284
 [¹Sw]ich subtil lookyng^t and dissimulynges [¹ *Rats.* leaf 132, back]
 ffor drede / of Ialous mennes *apreceyuynges*
 No man but launcelot' and he is deed
 Ther fore I passe / of al this lustiheed 288

I sey namoore / but in this Iolynesse
 I lete hem / til men / to the souper dresse
 ¶ The Styward / byt Spices for to hye
 And eek the wyn / in al this melodye 292
 The vsshers / and the Squyers / been ygon
 The Spices and the wyn / is come anon
 They ete and drynke / and whan this hadde an ende
 Vn to the temple / as reson was they wende 296
 ¶ The seruyce doon / they soupen al by day
 What nedeth yow / rehercen hir array
 Ech man woot wel / þat at a kynges feste
 Hath plentee / to the meeste / and to the leeste 300
 And deyntees / mo than been in my knowyng
 At after souper / gooth this noble kyng
 To seen this hors of bras / with al a route
 Of lordes / and of ladyes / hym aboute 304
 ¶ Swich wondryng was ther / on this hors of bras
 That syn the grete sege / of Troye was
 Ther as men wondreden / on an hors also
 Ne was ther / swich a wondryng as was tho 308
 But finally / the kyng axeth this knyght
 The vertu of this Courser / and the myght
 And preyed hym / to telle his gouernaunce
 ¶ This hors anon / gan for to trippe and daunce 312
 Whan þat this knyght leyde hand vp on his reyne
 And seyde sire / ther nys namoore to seyne
 But whan yow list to ryden any where
 Ye moten trille a pyn / stant in his ere 316
 Which I shal yow telle / bitwixe vs two
 Ye mote nempne hym / to what place also
 Or to what contree / þat yow list to ryde
 And whan ye come / ther as yow list abyde 320
 Byd hym descende / and tryl another pyn
 ffor ther Inne lyth / theeffect of al the gyn
 And he wol doun descende / and doon youre wille
 And in that place / he wol abiden stille 324

Theigh al the world / the contrarie hadde yswore [leaf 133]
 He shal nat thennes / be y-drawe nor ybore
 Or if yow list / bidde hym thennes gon
 Trille this pyn / and he wol vanysse anon 328
 Out of the sighte / of euery maner wight
 And come agayn / be it day or nyght
 Whan þat yow list to clepen hym ageyn
 In swich a gyse / as I shal to yow seyn 332
 Bitwixen yow and me / and that ful soone
 Ryd whan yow lust ther is namoore to doone
 ¶ Enformed / whan the kyng was of that knyght
 And hath conceyued / in his wit aright 336
 The manere / and the forme / of al this thyng
 fful glad and blythe / this noble doghty kyng
 Repeireth to his reuel / as biforn
 The brydel is / vn to the tour yborn 340
 And kept among his Iewels / lief and deere
 The hors vanysshed / I noot in which manere
 Out of hir sighte / ye gete namoore for me
 But thus I lete / in lust and Iolitee 344
 This Cambynskan / his lordes festeynge
 Til wel neigh / the day bigan to sprynge

¶ Explicit prima pars ∞

¶ Incipit pars secunda ∞

The norice of digestion / the sleepe
 Gan on hem wyuke / and bad hem take keep 348
 That mucche drynke and labour / wol haue reste
 And with a galpyng mouth / hem alle he keste
 And seyde / that it was tyme / to lye adoun
 ffor blood / was in his domynacioun 352
 Cherisseth blood / natures freend quod he
 They thanken hym galpynge / by two / by thre
 And euery wight gan drawe hym to his reste
 As sleepe hem bad / they take it for the beste 356

- ¶ Hir dremes / shul nat now be toold for me
 fful were hir heuedes / of fumositee
 [¹That cau]seth dreem / of which ther nys no charge <sup>[¹Roth. leat
133, bk]</sup>
 [¹The]y slepen / til that it was pryme large 360
 The mooste part but it were Canacee
 She was ful mesurable / as wommen be
 ffor of hir fader / hadde she take leue
 To goon to reste / soone after it was eue 364
 Hir liste nat apalled for to be
 Nor on the morwe / vnfestlich for to se
 And slepte hir firste sleep / and awook
 ffor swich a ioye / she in her herte took 368
 Bothe of hir queynte ryng and hir Mirour
 That .xx. tyme / she chaunged hir colour
 And in hir sleepe / right for impressiõ
 Of hir Mirour / she hadde a visiõ 372
 Wher fore / er þat the sonne gan vp glyde
 She clepyd / vp on hir maistresse / hir bisyde
 And seyde / þat hir liste for to ryse
 ¶ Thise olde wommen / þat been gladly wyse 376
 As is hir maystresse / answerde hir anon
 And seyde / madame / whider wolde ye gon
 Thus erly / for the folk been alle on reste
 ¶ I wol quod she aryse / for me leste 380
 No lenger for to slepe / and walke aboute
 Hir maistresse / clepith wommen / a gret route
 And vp they rysen / wel an .x. or .xij.^e
 Vp, riseth / fresshe Canacee hir selue 384
 As rody and bright as dooth the yonge sonne
 That in the ram / is .4. degrees vp ronne
 Noon hyere was he / whan she redy was
 And forth she walketh / esily a pas 388
 Arrayed / after the lusty seson soote
 Lightly for to pleye / and walke on foote
 Nat but with .v. or .vj. of hir meynee
 And in a trench / forth in the park goth she 392

¶ The vapour / which þat fro the erthe glood
 Made the sonne / to seme rody and brood
 But nathelees / it was so fair a sighte
 That it made / al hir hertes for to lighte 396
 What for the seson / and the morwenynge
 And for the fowles / that she herde synge
 ffor right anon / she wiste what they mente [leaf 134]
 Right by hir song^t and knew al hir entente 400
 ¶ The knotte / why / that euery tale is told
 If it be taryed / til þat^t lust^t be cold
 Of hem / þat han it after herkned yore
 The sauour passeth / euer lenger the moore 404
 ffor fulsomnesse / of his *prolixitee*
 And by this same reson / thynketh me
 I scholde / to the knotte condescende
 And maken of hir walkyng^t soone an ende 408
 ¶ Amydde a tree / for drye as whit as chalk/
 As Canacee / was pleyynge in hir walk^t
 Ther sat a ffawkon / ouer hir heed ful hye
 And with a pitous voys / so gan to crye 412
 That al the wode / resowned of hir cry
 ybeten hadde she hir self / so pitously
 with bothe hir wynges / til the rede blood
 Ran endelong the tree / ther as she stood 416
 And euere in oon / she cryde alwey and shrigh^te
 And with hir beek^t hir seluen so she prigh^te
 That ther nys tygre / ne so cruel beest^t
 That dwelleth / outh^r in wode / or in fforest^t 420
 That nolde han wept^t / if þat he wepe koude
 ffor sorwe of hire / she shrigh^te alwey so loude
 ¶ ffor ther nas neuere man / yet on lyue
 If þat I koude / a ffaukon wel discryue 424
 That herde of swich another / of fairnesse
 As wel of plumage / as of gentillesse
 Of shape / of al that myghte yrekened be
 A ffaukon peregryn / thanne semed she 428

Of fremde land / and euere moore as she stood
 She swowned now and now / for lakke of blood
 Til wel neigh / is she fallen / fro that tree
 ¶ This faire kynges doghter Canacee 432
 That on hir fynger / baar the queynte ryng^t
 Thurgh which / she vnderstood wel euery thyng^t
 That any fowl / may in his ledne sayn
 And koude answer hym / in his ledne agayn 436
 Hath vnderstonden / what this ffaukon seyde
 And wel neigh for the routhe / almoost^t she deyde
 [¹A]nd t[o] the tree / she goth ful hastily [¹Rats. leaf 134, back]
 [¹A]nd on this ffaukon / looketh pitously 440
 And heeld hir lappe abroad / for wel she wiste
 The ffaukon / moste fallen fro the twiste
 Whan þat it swowneth next^t for lakke of blood
 A long while / to wayten hir she stood 444
 Til at the laste / she spak / in this manere
 Vn to the hauk^t / as ye shal after heere
 ¶ What is the cause / if it be for to telle
 That ye been / in this furial pyne of helle 448
 Quod Canacee / vn to this hauk aboue
 Is this for sorwe of deeth / or los of loue
 ffor as I trowe / thise been causes two
 That causen moost/ a gentil herte wo 452
 Of oother harm / it nedeth nat to speke
 ffor ye your self^t / vp on yow self yow wreke
 Which proeueth wel / þat outhere Ire or drede
 Moot been encheson / of youre cruel dede 456
 Syn þat I se / noon oother wight yow chace
 ffor loue of god / as dooth your seluen grace
 Or what may been youre help / for west nor Est^t
 Ne saw I neuere er now / no bryd ne beest^t 460
 That ferde / with hym self so pitously
 Ye sleen me / with youre sorwe verrailly
 I haue of yow / so greet compassioun
 ffor goddes loue / com fro the tree adoun 464

And as I am / a kynges doghter trewe
 If þat I verrailly / the cause knewe
 Of youre disese / if it laye in my myght
 I wolde amende it' er that it were nyght' 468
 As wisly help me / grete god of kynde
 And herbes / shal I right ynowe fynde
 To heele with / youre hurtes hastily
 ¶ Tho shrighthe this ffaukon / yet moore pitously 472
 Than euer she dide / and fil to ground anon
 And lyth aswowne deed / and lik a ston
 Til Canacee / hath in hir lappe hir take
 Vn to that tyme / she gan of swowne awake 476
 And aftere / that she of swow / gan abreyde
 Right in hir haukes ledne / thus she seyde
 That pitee renneth soone / in gentil herte [leaf 135]
 ffelynge his similitude / in peynes smerte 480
 Is proued al day / as men may it see
 As wel by werk/ as by auctoritee
 ffor gentil herte / kitheth gentillesse
 I se wel / þat ye han of my distresse 484
 Compassion / my faire Canacee
 Of verray / wommanly benygnitee
 That nature / in youre principles hath set/
 But for noon hope / for to fare the bet' 488
 But for to obeye / vn to youre herte free
 And for to maken othere / ywar by me
 As by the whelpe / chasted is the leon
 Right for that cause / and for that conclusiō 492
 Whil þat I haue / a leyser and a space
 Myn harm / I wol confessen / er I pace
 And euere / whil þat oon / hir sorwe tolde
 That oother weep / as she to water wolde 496
 Til þat the ffaukon / bad hir to be stille
 And with a syk/ right thus she seyde hir wille
 ¶ Ther I was bred / allas that ilke day
 And fostred in a Roch / of Marbul gray 500

So tendrely / þat no thyng eyled me
 I nyste nat what was aduersitee
 Til I koude fle / ful hye vnder the sky
 Tho dwelte a tercelet me faste by 504
 That semed welle / of alle gentillesse
 Al were he ful / of trayson and falsnesse
 If was so wrapped / vnder humble cheere
 And vnder hewe of trouthe / in swich manere 508
 Vnder plesaunce / and vnder bisy peyne
 That no wight wolde han wend / he koude feyne
 So depe in greyn / he dyed his colours
 Right as a serpent hit hym vnder floures 512
 Til he may se his tyme / for to byte
 Right so / this god of loues ypocrite
 Dooth so his cerymonijs / and obeysañces
 And kepeth in semblant alle hise obseruañces 516
 That sownen / in to gentillesse of loue
 As on a Tombe / is al the faire aboue
 [An]d vnder is the cors / swich as ye woot ^{[¹ Rats. leaf}
 Swich was this ypocrite / bothe cold and hoot 520
 And in this wise / he serued his entente
 That saue the feend / noon wiste what he mente
 Til he so longe / hadde wopen and compleyned
 A many a yeer / his seruice to me feyned 524
 Til that myn herte / to pitous and to nyce
 Al Innocent of his crowned malice
 ffor-fered of his deeth / as thoughte me
 Vp on his othes / and his seuretee 528
 Graunted hym loue / vp on this condicioun
 That euere mo / myn honour and renoun
 Were saued / bothe pryuee and apert
 That is to seyn / that after his desert 532
 I yaf hym al myn herte / and my thoght
 God woot and he / þat oother wise noght
 And took his herte / in chaunge of myn for ay
 But sooth is seyð / goon sithen many a day 536

A trewe wight and a theef / thyneketh nat oon
 ¶ And whanne he saw the thyng^t so fer ygon
 That I hadde graunted hym fully my loue
 In swich a gise / as I haue seyde aboue 540
 And yeuen hym / my trewe herte as fre
 As he swoor / he yaf his herte to me
 Anoon this tygre / ful of doublenesse
 fil on his knees / with so deuout humblesse 544
 With so heigh reuerence / and as by his cheere
 So lyk a gentil louere / of manere
 So rauysshed / as it semed for the ioye
 That neuere Iason / ne Parys of Troye 548
 Iason *certes* / ne noon oother man
 Syn Lameth was / þæt alderfirst bigan
 To louen two / as writen folk biforn
 Ne neuere / syn / the firste man was born 552
 Ne koude man / by twenty thousand part
 Countrefete / the Sophymes of his art
 Ne were worthy / vnbokele his galoche
 Ther doublenesse / or feynyng sholde approche 556
 Ne so koude thanke a wight^t as he did me
 His manere / was an heuene for to see
 Til any womman / were she neuer so wys (leaf 136)
 So peynted he / and kembde at poynt deys 560
 As wel his wordes / as his contenance
 And I so loued hym / for his obeisaunce
 And for the trouthe / I demed in his herte
 That if so weere / that any thyng hym smerte 564
 Al were it neuer so litel / and I it wiste
 Me thoughte / I felte deeth myn herte twiste
 And shortly / so ferforth this thyng is went^t
 That my wyl / was his willes Instrument 568
 This is to seyn / my wyl obeyed his wil
 In alle thyng^t as fer as reson fil
 Kepyng the boundes / of my worship euere
 Ne neuere hadde I thyng^t so lief ne leuere 572

As hym god woot ne neuere shal namo
 ¶ This laste lenger / than a yeer / or two
 That I supposed of hym nat but good
 But finally / thus a the laste it stood 576
 That ffortune wolde / þat he moste twynne
 Out of that place / which þat I was Inne
 Wher me was wo / that is no question
 I kan nat make of it descripsion 580
 ffor o thyng dar I tellen boldely
 I knowe what is / the peyne of deeth ther by
 Swich harm I felte / for he ne myghte bileue
 So on a day / of me he took his leue 584
 So sorwefully eek / that I wende verrailly
 That he hadde feelyd / as mucche harm as I
 Whan that I herde hym speke / and saw his hewe
 But nathelees / I thoughte he was so trewe 588
 And eek / that he repeyre sholde agayn
 With Inne a litel while / sooth to sayn
 And reson wolde eek þat he moste go
 ffor his honour / as ofte happeth so 592
 That I made / vertu of necessitee
 And took it wel / syn þat it moste be
 As I best myghte / I hidde from hym my sorwe
 And took hym by the hand / Seint Ioħn to borwe 596
 And seyde thus / lo I am youres al
 Beeth swich / as I to yow haue been and shal
 [What he¹] answerde / it nedeth nat reherse [¹ Rats. 1f 136, bk]
 [Who¹] kan seyn bet than he / who kan doon werse 600
 [¹W]han he hath al wel seyde / thanne hath he doon
 Ther fore bihoued hire / a ful long spoon
 That shal ete with a feend / thus herde I seye
 So at the laste / he moste forth his weye 604
 And forth he fleeth / til he cam ther hym leste
 ¶ Whan it cam hym / to purpos for to reste
 I trowe he hadde / thilke text in mynde
 That alle thing reperyng to his kynde ¶ *reditu suo singula
gaudent.*

Gladeth hym self / thus seyn men as I gesse
 Men louen of *propre* kynde / Newfangelnesse
 As bryddes doon / that men in Cages feede
 ffor theigh thow / nyght and day / take of hem hede 612
 And strawe hir Cages / faire / and softe as sylk/
 And yeue hem sugre / hony / breed / and Milk
 Yet right anon / as þat his dore is vppe
 He with his feet^t wol sporne down his cuppe 616
 And to the wode he wole / and wormes ete
 So newfangel / been they of hir mete
 And louen nonelries / of *propre* kynde
 No gentilesse of blood / may hem bynde 620
 ¶ So ferde this gentil tercelet^t allas the day
 Thogh he were gentil born / and fressh and gay
 And goodlich for to seen / and humble and free
 He saw vp on a tyme / a kyte flee 624
 And sodeynly / he loued this kyte so
 That al his loue / is clene fro me ago
 And hath his trouthe / falsed in this wise
 Thus hath the kyte / my loue in hir seruyse 628
 And I am lorn / with outen remedye
 And with that word / this ffaukon gan to crye
 And swowned eft/ in Canacees barm
 ¶ Greet was the sorwe / for the haukes harm 632
 That Canacee / and alle hir wommen made
 They nyste / how þat they myghte the ffaukon glade
 But Canacee / hom bereth hire / in hir lappe
 And softely / in plastres gan hir wrappe 636
 Ther as she with hir beek/ hadde hurt hir selue
 ¶ Now kan nat Canacee / but herbes delue
 Out^t of the grownd / and maken Sauces newe [leaf 137]
 Of herbes *precieuse* / and fyn of hewe 640
 To heelen with this hauk / fro day to nyght^t
 She dooth hir bisynesse / and al hir myght^t
 And by hir beddes heed / she made a Muwe
 And couered it / with veluettes blue 644

In signe of trouthe / that is in wommen sene
 And al with oute / the Muwe is peynted grene
 In which were peynted / alle thise false fowles
 As been thise tydyues / terceletz / and Owles 648
 Right for despit^t were peynted hem bisyde
 And Pyes / on hem / for to crye / and chyde
 ¶ Thus lete I Canacee / hir hauk kepyng^t
 I wol namoore as now / speke of hir ryng^t 652
 Til it come eft to purpos for to seyn
 How that this ffaukon / gat hir loue ageyn
 Repentant / as the storie telleth vs
 By mediacion / of Cambalus 656
 The kynges sone / of which I to yow tolde
 But hennes fort^t I wol my proces holde
 To speke of auentures / and of batailles
 That neuere yet^t was herd / so greet meruailles 660
 ¶ ffirst wol I telle yow / of Cambynskan
 That in his tyme / many a Citee wan
 ¶ And after / wol I speke / of Algarsyf^t
 How that he wan / Theodora to his wyf 664
 ffor whom ful ofte / in gret peril he was
 Ne hadde he been holpen / by the Steede of bras
 ¶ And after / wol I speke of Cambalo
 That faught in lystes / with the bretheren two 668
 ffor Canacee / er that he myghte hir wyne
 And ther I lefte / I wol ayein bigyune
 ¶ Explicit^t secunda pars 𐀚

[¹Inci]pit^t tercia pars 𐀚

[¹ Head-line. leaf 137, back]

Appollo whirleth vp / his Char so hye
 Til that / the god Mercuries hous the slye 672

¶ The prologe / of the Marchautes tale 𐞂 [leaf 137, back]

IN feith squyer/ thow hast thee wel yquyt'
 And gentilly / I preise wel thy wit
 Quod the Marchant' considerynge thy youthe
 So feelyngly thow spekest' sire I allowthe 676
 As to my doom / ther is noon þat is heere
 Of eloquence / þat shal be thy peere
 If þat thow lyue / god yeue thee good chaunce
 And in vertu / sende thee continuaunce 680
 ffor of thy speche / I haue gret deyntee
 I haue a sone / and by the Trinitee
 I hadde leuere / than .xx.^{ti} pound worth lond
 Thogh it right now ./ were fallen in myn hond 684
 He were a man / of swich discrecioñ
 As þat ye ben / fy on possession
 But if a man / be vertuous with al
 I haue my sone snybbed / and yit shal 688
 ffor he to vertu / lusteth nat entende
 But for to pleye at dees / and to despende
 And lese al that he hath / is his vsage
 And he hath leuere / talken with a page 692
 Than to commune / with any gentil wight'
 Where he myghte lerne / gentillesse aright'
 ¶ Straw for youre gentillesse / quod oure hoost
 What Marchañt / pardee sire wel thow woost 696
 That ech of yow / moot tellen atte leeste
 A tale / or two / or breken his biheste
 ¶ That knowe I wel sire / quod the Marchant certeyn
 I prey yow / haueth me nat in desdeyn 700

Thogh to this man / I speke a word or two
 ¶ Telle on thy tale / with outen wordes mo
 ¶ Gladly sire hoost quod he / I wol obeye
 Vn to youre wyl / now herkneth what I seye . . . 704
 I wole yow nat contrarien / in no wise
 As fer / as þat my wittes wole suffise
 I prey to god / that it may plesen yow
 Thanne woot I wel / that it is good ynow . . . 708

Explicit

[For the Latin side-notes to the Merchant's Tale, see p. 350 at the end of the Tale.]

¶ Here bigynneth / the Marchantes tale. [leaf 178]

Whilom / ther was dwellynge in Lumbardye
 A worthy knyght / that born was of Pauye
 In which he lyuede / in greet prosperitee
 And .lx. yeer / a wifles man was he 1248
 And folwed ay / his bodily delit
 On wommen / ther as was his appetit
 As doon thise fooles / that been secular
 And whan that he / was passed .lx. yeer 1252
 Were it for holynesse / or for dotage
 I kan nat seye / but swich a greet corage
 Hadde this knyght / to been a wedded man
 That day and nyght / he dooth al that he kan 1256
 Tespien / where he myghte wedded be
 Preyngre oure lord / to graunten hym / þat he
 Mighte ones knowe / of thilke blisful lyf
 That is / bitwix an housbonde and his wyf 1260
 And for to lyue / vnder that holy bond
 With which / þat god / man and womman boond
 Noon oother lyf seyde he / is worth a bene
 ffor wedlok is so esy / and so clene 1264
 That in this world / it is a Paradys
 Thus seyde this olde knyght þat was so wys
 ¶ And certeynly / as sooth as god is kyng
 To take a wyf / it is a glorious thyng 1268
 And namely / whan a man is old and hoor
 Thanne is a wyf / the fruyt of his tresor
 Thanne sholde he take / a yong wyf and a feir
 On which he myghte / engendren hym an heir 1272

And lede his lyf in ioie / and in solas
 Wher/ as thise Bachilers / synge allas
 Whan þat they fynde / any aduersitee
 In loue / which nys but childissh vanytee 1276
 And trewely / it sit wel to be so
 That Bachilers / haue ofte peyne and wo
 On brotil ground they bilde / and brotilnesse
 They fynde / whan they wene sikernessee 1280
 [They ly¹]ue / but as bryd / or as a beest¹ [Rats. leaf 138, back]
 [In l¹]ibertee / and vnder noon arrest¹
 [T¹]her as a wedded man / in his estat¹
 Lyueth a lyf / blisful and ordynat¹ 1284
 Vnder this yok¹ of mariage ybounde
 Wel may his herte / in ioie and blisse habounde
 ffor who kan be / so buxom as a wyf
 Who is so trewe / and eek so ententyf¹ 1288
 To kepe hym syk and hool / as is his make
 ffor wele or wo / she wol hym nat forsake
 She nys nat wery / hym to loue / and serue
 Thogh þat he ly bedrede / til he sterue 1292
 And yet¹ som clerkes seyn / it is nat so
 Of whiche / he Theofraste / is oon of tho
 What force / thogh Theofraste liste lye
 ¶ Ne tak no wyf quod he / for housbondrye 1296
 As for to spare / in houshold thy dispence
 A trewe seruant¹ dooth moore diligence
 Thy good to kepe / than thyn owene wyf
 ffor she wol clayme / half part al hir lyf 1300
 And if thou be syk / so god me saue
 Thy verray freendes / or a trewe knaue
 Wol kepe thee bet than she / that wayteth ay
 After thy good / and hath do many a day 1304
 And if thou take a wyf / ¹ she wole destroye^[1-1 Written in a rather later ink and hand.]
 Thy good substance / and thy body annoye¹ [? spurious]
 ¶ This sentence / and an hundred thynges worse
 Writeth this man / ther god his bones curse 1308

But tak no kepe / of al swich vanytee
 Diffye Theofraste / and herke me
 ¶ A wyf is goddes yifte verraily [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 Alle othere manere yiftes hardily 1312
 As londes / rentes / pasture / or comune
 Or moebles / alle been yiftes of fortune
 That passen / as a shadwe vp on the wal
 But dreed nat^t if pleynly speke I shal 1316
 A wyf wol laste / and in thyn hous endure
 Wel lenger than thee lyst^t *per*aventure
 ¶ Mariage / is a ful greet sacrament^t
 He / which þat hath no wyf I holde hym shent^t 1320
 He lyueth helplees / and al desolat^t [leaf 189]
 I speke of folk / in seculer estat^t
 ¶ And herke why / I sey nat this for noght^t
 That womman is / for mannes helpe ywroght^t 1324
 The hye god / whan he hadde Adam maked
 And seigh hym allone / bely naked
 God of his grete goodnesse seyde than [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 Lat vs now make an help / vn-to this man 1328
 Lyk to hym self^t and thanne he made hym Eue
 Here may ye see / and here may ye-preeue
 That wyf is mannes helpe / and his confort^t
 His Paradys terrestre / and his disport^t 1332
 So buxom / and so *vertuous* is she
 They moste nedes lyue in vnytee
 O flessch they been / and o flessch as I gesse
 Hath but oon herte / in wele and in distresse } nota [*Latin note*,
p. 477]
 ¶ A wyf / a Seinte Marie benedicitee
 How myghte a man / han any aduersitee
 That hath a wyf / certes I kan nat seye
 The blisse / which þat is bitwix hem tweye 1340
 Ther may no tonge telle / or herte thynke
 If he be poure / she helpeth hym to swynke
 She kepeth his good / and wasteth neuer a del
 Al that hir housbonde lust^t hir liketh wel 1344

She seith nat ones nay / whan he seith yee
 Do this seith he / al redy sire seith she
 ¶ O blisful ordre / o wedlok precious
 Thou art so murye / and eek so vertuous 1348
 And so commended / and approued eek
 That any man / that halt hym worth a leek
 Vp on his bare knees / oghte al his lyf
 Thanken his god / that hym hath sent a wyf 1352
 Or ellis preye to god / hym for to sende
 A wyf / to laste vn to his lyues ende
 ffor thanne his lyf / is set in sikernesse
 He may nat be / deceyued / as I gesse 1356
 So that he werke / after his wyues reed
 Thanne may he boldely / kepen vp his heed
 They been so trewe / and ther with al so wyse
 ffor which / if thow wolt werken as the wyse 1360
 [Do al¹]wey so / as wommen wol thee rede [¹ *Rats.* If 139, bk]
 [L¹]o how that Iacob / as thise clerkes rede [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 By good conseil / of his moder Rebekke
 Boond the kydes skyn / aboute his nekke 1364
 ffor which / his fadres benyson he wan
 ¶ Lo Iudith / as the storie eek telle kan
 By good conseil / she goddes peple kepte 1367
 And slow hym Olofernus / whil he slepte [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 ¶ Lo Abigayl / by good conseil / how she [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 Saued hir housbonde Nabal / whan þat he
 Sholde han ben slayn / and looke Ester also [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 By good conseil / delyuered out of wo 1372
 The peple of god / and made hym Mardochee
 Of Assuere / enhaunced for to be
 ¶ Ther nys no thyng^t in gree superlatyf 1375
 As seith Senec^t / aboue an humble wyf [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 ¶ Suffre thy wyues tonge / as Caton byt^t
 She shal comaunde / and thow shalt suffren it / [*Latin note*, p. 477]
 And yet she wol obeye of curteisye
 ¶ A wyf / is kepere of thyn housbondrye 1380

Wel may the sike man / biwaille and wepe
 Ther as ther is no wyf/ the hous to kepe
 I warne thee / if wisly thow wolt wirche [Latin note, p. 477]
 Loue wel thy wyf/ as Crist loued his chirche [Latin note, p. 477]
 If thow louest thy self / thow louest thy wif 1385
 No man hateth his flessch / but in his lyf/
 He fostreth it and therfore bidde I thee
 Cherisse thy wyf or thow shalt neuere thee 1388
 Housbonde and wyf what so men Iaye or pleye
 Of worldly folk/ holden the siker weye
 They been so knyht / ther may noon harm bityde
 And namely / vp on the wyues syde 1392
 ffor which this Ianuarie / of whom I tolde
 Considered hath / inwith his dayes olde
 The lusty lyf / the vertuous quyete
 That is in mariage / hony swete 1396
 And for his freendes / on a day he sente
 To tellen hem / theffect of his entente
 ¶ With face sad / this tale he hath hem told
 He seyde freendes / I am hoor and old 1400
 And almoost god woot on my pittes brynke [leaf 140]
 Vp on my soule / som what moste I thynke
 I haue my body / folily despended
 Blissed be god / þat it shal been amended 1404
 ffor I wol be certeyn / a wedded man
 And that anon / in al the haste I kan
 Vn to som mayde / fair and tendre of age
 I pray yow / shapeth for my mariage 1408
 Al sodeynly / for I wol nat abyde
 And I wol fonde / tespien on my side
 To whom I may / be wedded hastily
 But for as muche / as ye been mo than I. 1412
 Ye shullen rather / swich a thing espien
 Than .I / and where me beste were to allien
 ¶ But o thyng warne I yow / my freendes deere
 I wol noon old wyf han / in no manere 1416

She shal nat passe / .xx. yer certeyn
 Old fiss^h / and yong fless^h / wol I haue feyn
 Bet is quod he / a Pyk / than a Pykerel
 And bet than old boef^t / is the tendre vel 1420
 I wol no womman / xxx^{ti}. yeer of age
 It is but bene straw / and greet forage
 And eek thise olde widwes / god it woot^t
 They konne so muche craft^t on Wades boot^t 1424
 So muchel broken harm / whan hem leste
 That with hem / sholde I neuere lyue in reste
 ffor sondry scoles / maketh subtile clerkis
 Womman of many scoles / half a clerk is 1428
 But certainly / a yong thyng may men gye
 Right as men may warm wex / with handes plye
 Wherefore / I sey yow pleyndly in a clause
 I wol noon old wyf han / right for this cause 1432
 ffor if so were / I hadde swich meschaunce
 That I in hire / ne koude han no plesaunce
 Thanne sholde I lede my lyf / in avoutrye
 And go streight to the deuel / whan I dye 1436
 Ne children sholde I none / vp on hir geten
 Yet were me leuere / houndes hadde me eten
 Than that myn heritage sholde falle
 In straunge hand / and this I telle yow alle 1440
 [1 I d]ote nat / I woot the cause why [1 Rots. leaf 140, back]
 Men sholde wedde / and ferther moore woot I
 Ther speketh many a man of mariage
 That woot namoore of it / than woot my page 1444
 ffor whiche causes / man sholde take a wyf
 If he ne may nat lyue / chast his lyf
 Take hym a wyf / with greet deuocioñ
 By cause / of leueful procreacioñ 1448
 Of children / to thonour of god aboue
 And nat oonly / for paramour or loue
 And for they sholde / lecherye eschue
 And yelde hir dette / whan þat it is due 1452

Or for þat ech of hem / sholde helpen oother
 In meschief as a Suster shal the brother
 And lyue in chastitee / ful holily
 But sires by youre leue / that am nat I 1456
 ffor god be thanked / I dar make auant
 I feele my lymes / stark and suffisant
 To do / al that a man bilongeth to
 I woot my self best what I may do 1460
 ¶ Thogh I be hoor / I fare as dooth a tree ¶ *Nota*
 That blasmeth / er the fruyt ywoxen be
 And blosmy tree / nys neither drye ne deed
 I feele me nowher hoor / but on myn heed 1464
 Myn herte / and alle my lymes / been as grene
 As laurer thurgh the yeer is for to sene
 And syn þat ye han herd / al myn entente
 I pray yow / to my conseil ye wol assente 1468
 ¶ Dyuerse men / diuersely hym tolde
 Of mariage / manye ensamples olde
 Somme blamed it somme preised it certeyn
 But at the laste / shortly for to seyn 1472
 As alday / falleth altercacion
 Bitwixe freendes / in disputison
 Ther fil a stryft bitwix his bretheren two
 Of whiche / that oon was clepid Placebo 1476
 Iustinus soothly / called was that oother
 ¶ Placebo seyde / o Ianuarie brother
 fful litel nede / hadde ye my lord so deere
 Conseil to axe / of any that is heere 1480
 But þat ye been / so ful of Sapience [leaf 141]
 That yow ne liketh / for youre heigh prudence
 To weyuen / fro the word of Salomon
 This word seyde he / vn to vs euerichon 1484
 Werk alle thyng by conseil / thus seyde he
 And thanne shaltow nat repenten thee
 But thogh þat Salamon / spak swich a word
 Myn owene deere brother / and my lord 1488

So wisly / god my soule brynge at reste
 I holde / your owene conseil is the beste
 ffor brother myn / of me tak this motyf
 I haue now been / a Court man al my lyf 1492
 And god it woot^t thogh I vnworthy be
 I haue stonden / in ful greet degree
 Abouten lordes / in ful greet estat
 Yet hadde I neuere / with noon of hem debat 1496
 I neuere hem contraryed / trewely
 I woot wel / þat my lord kan moore than I
 What that he seith / I holde it ferm and stable
 I seye the same / or ellis thyng semblable 1500
 A ful greet fool / is any conceillour
 That serueth any lord / of heigh honour
 That dar presume / or ellis thenken it
 That his conseil / sholde passe his lordes wit 1504
 Nay / lordes be no fooles by my fay
 Ye han your seluen / shewed heer to day
 So heigh sentence / so holily and weel
 That I consente / and conferme euery deel 1508
 Youre wordes alle / and youre opynyoun
 By god / ther nys no man in al this toun
 Ne in Ytaille / koude bet han ysayd
 Crist halt hym of this conseil / ful wel apayd 1512
 And trewely / it is an heigh corage
 Of any man / that stapen is an age
 To take a yong wyf / by my fader kyn
 Youre herte hangeth / on a iolyf pyn 1516
 Dooth now in this matere / right as yow leste
 ffor fynally / I holde it for the beste
 ¶ Iustinus / that ay stille sat and herde
 Right in this wise / he to Placebo answerde 1520
 [No¹]w brother myn / be pacient I preye [¹ *Eats.* leaf 141, back]
 [S¹]yn ye han seyde / and herkneth what I seye
 Senec^e amonges othere wordes wise
 Seith / þat a man / oghte hym right wel auyse 1524

To whom / he yeueth his lond / or his catel
 And syn I oghte / auysen me right wel
 To whom I yeeue my good / away fro me
 Wel muchel moore / I oghte auysed be 1528
 To whom I yeeue my body / for alwey
 I warne yow wel / it is no childes pley
 To taken a wyf withouten auysement
 Men moste enquire / this is myn assent 1532
 Wher she be wys and sobre / or dronkelewe
 Or proud / or ellis oother weys a shrewe
 A chidester / or wastour of thy good
 Or riche / or poure / or ellis mannyssh wood 1536
 Al be it so / þat no man fynden shal
 Noon in this world / that trotteth hool in al
 Ne man ne beast swich as men koude deuyse
 But nathelees / it oghte ynogh suffise 1540
 With any wyf if so were þat she hadde
 Mo goode thewes / than hir vices badde
 And al this axeth leyser / for tenquere
 ffor god it woot I haue wept many a teere 1544
 fful pryuely / syn þat I hadde a wyf
 Preyse who so wole / a wedded mannes lyf
 Certeyn I fynde in it but cost and care
 And obseruances / of alle blisses bare 1548
 And yet god woot my neghebores aboute
 And namely / of wommen many a route
 Seyn þat I haue / the mooste stedefast wyf
 And eek the mekeste / that bereth lyf 1552
 But I woot best where wryngeth me my sho
 Ye mowe for me / right as yow liketh do
 Auyseth yow / ye been a man of age
 How þat ye entren / in to mariage 1556
 And namely / with a yong wyf and a feir
 By him þat made water / erthe and Eir
 The yongest man / þat is in al this route
 Is bisy ynow / to bryngen it aboute 1560

To han his wyf allone / trusteth me [leaf 142]
 Ye shul nat plesen hire / fully yeres thre
 This is to seyn / to doon hire ful plesance
 A wyf axeth / ful many an obseruance 1564
 I pray yow / þat ye be nat yuele apayd
 ¶ Wel quod this Ianuarie / and hastow y-sayd
 Straw for thy Senec and for thy proverbes
 I counte nat / a panyer ful of herbes 1568
 Of Scole termes / wiser man than thow
 As thow hast herd / assenteden right now
 To my purpos / Placebo what sey ye
 ¶ I seye / it is a cursed man quod he 1572
 That letteth matrymoigne sikerly
 And with that word / they risen sodeynly
 And been assented fully / that he sholde
 Be wedded whan hym liste / and wher he wolde 1576
 ¶ Heigh fantasie / and curious bisynesse
 ffro day to day / gan in the soule impresse
 Of Ianuarie / aboute his mariage
 Many fair shape / and many a fair visage 1580
 Ther passeth thurgh his herte / nyght by nyght
 As who so tooke a Mirour / polished bright
 And sette it in a commune Market place
 Thanne sholde he se / ful many a figure pace 1584
 By his Mirour / and in the same wise
 Gan Ianuarie / in with his thoght deuyse
 Of maydens / whiche þat dwelten hym bisyde
 He wiste nat wher þat he myghte abyde 1588
 ffor if þat oon / haue beautee in hir face
 Another stant so / in the peples grace
 ffor hir sadnesse / and hir benygnytee
 That of the peple / grettest voys hath she 1592
 And somme were riche / and hadden badde name
 But nathelees / bitwene ernest and game
 He atte laste / apoynted hym on oon
 And leet alle othere / from his herte goon 1596

And chees hire / of his owene auctoritee
 ffor loue is blynd alday / and may nat see
 And whan that he / was in his bed ybrought
 He purtreyde / in his herte / and in his thoght 1600
 [Hir¹] fresshe beautee / and hir age tendre [¹ *Rats.* If 142, bk]
 [H¹]ir myddel smal / hir armes longe and sklendre
 Hir wise gouernance / hir gentillesse
 Hir wommanly beryng^t and hir sadnesse 1604
 And whan þat he on hire / was condescended
 Hym thoughte / his choys myghte nat ben amended
 ffor whan þat he hym self/ concluded hadde
 Hym thoughte / ech oother mannes wit^t was badde 1608
 That impossible / it weere to replye
 Agayn his choys / this was his fantasie
 ¶ His freendes sente he to / at his instance
 And preyde hem / to doon hym that plesance 1612
 That hastily / they wolden to hym come
 He wolde abregge hir labour alle and some
 Nedeth namoore / for hym to go ne ryde
 He was apointed / ther he wolde abyde 1616
 ¶ Placebo cam / and eek his freendes soone
 And alderfirst^t he bad hem alle a boone
 That noon of hem / none argumentes make
 Agayn the purpos / which þat he hath take 1620
 Which purpos / was plesant to god seyde he
 And verray ground / of his prosperitee
 ¶ He seyde / ther was a mayden in the toun
 Which þat of beautee / hadde greet renoun 1624
 Al were it so / she were of smal degree
 Suffiseth hym / hir youthe and hir beautee
 Which mayde he seyde / he wolde han to his wyf
 To lede in ese / and holynesse his lyf 1628
 And thanked god / þat he myghte han hire al
 That no wight^t his blisse parten shal
 And preyde hem / to labouren in this nede
 And shapen / þat he faille nat to spede 1632

ffor thanne he seyde / his Spirit was at ese
 Thanne is quod he / no thyng may me displese
 Saue o thyng priketh in my conscience
 The which I wol reherce in youre presence 1636
 ¶ I haue quod he herd seyde / ful yooore ago
 Ther may no man / han parfite blisses two
 This is to seye / in erthe and eek in heuene
 ffor thogh he kepe hym / fro the synnes seuene 1640
 And eek from euery branche / of thilke tree [leaf 143]
 Yet is ther / so parfit felicitee
 And so greet ese / and lust in mariage
 That euere I am agast now in myn age 1644
 That I shal lede now / so murye a lyf
 So delicat with outen wo and stryf
 That I shal han myn heuene / in erthe heere
 ffor sith þat verray heuene / is boght so deere 1648
 With tribulacions / and greet penance
 How sholde I thanne / that lyue in swich plesance
 As alle wedded men / doon with hir wyuys
 Come to the blisse / that Crist eterne on lyue is 1652
 This is my drede / and ye my bretheren tweye
 Assoileth me / this question I preye
 ¶ Iustinus which þat hated his folye
 Answerde anon / right in his iaperye 1656
 And for he wolde / his longe tale abregge
 He wolde / noon auctoritee allegge
 But seide sire / so ther be noon obstacle
 Oother than this / god of his hye myracle 1660
 And of his mercy / may so for yow werche
 That er ye haue / your right of holy cherche
 Ye may repente / of wedded mannes lyf
 In which ye seyn / ther is no wo ne stryf 1664
 And ellis god forbede / but he sente
 A wedded man / hym grace to repente
 Wel ofte / rather than a sengle man
 And ther fore sire / the beste reed I kan 1668

Dispeire yow noght^t but haue in youre memorie
 Paraunter / she may be youre purgatorie
 She may be goddes mene / and goddes whippe
 Thanne shal your soule / vp to heuene skippe 1672
 Swifter / than dooth an arwe / out of a bowe
 I hope to god / heer after ye shul knowe
 That^t ther nys / noon so greet felicitee
 In mariage / ne neuere mo shal be 1676
 That yow shal lette / of youre saluacioñ
 So that ye vse / as skile is and resoñ
 The lustes of youre wyf / attemprely
 And þat / ye plesse hire / nat to amorously 1680
 [An¹]d that ye kepe yow eek/ from oother synne ^[¹ Rats. leaf 143, back]
 My tale is doon / for my wit is thynne
 Beth nat agast her-of / my brother deere
 But lat vs waden / out of this matere 1684
 The wyf of Bathe / if ye han vnderstonde
 Of mariage / which we han on honde
 Declared hath ful wel / in litel space
 ffareth now wel / god haue yow in his *grace* 1688
 ¶ And with that word / this Iustyn and his brother
 Han take hir leue / and ech of hem of oother
 ffor whan they sawe / þat it moste nedes be
 They wroghten so / by sly / and wys trettee 1692
 That she this mayden / which that Mayus highte
 As hastily / as euer þat she myghte
 Shal wedded be / vn to this Ianuarie
 ¶ I trowe / it were to longe yow to tarye 1696
 If I yow tolde / of euery scrit and bond
 By which / þat she was fefed / in his lond
 Or for to herknen / of hir riche array
 But finally / ycomen is that day 1700
 That to the chirche / bothe be they went
 ffor to receyue / the holy sacrament
 ¶ fforth comth the preest^t with stoole aboute his nekke
 And bad hire be lyk / Sarra and Rebekke 1704

In wisdom / and in trouthe of mariage
 And seyde his orisons / as is vsage
 And croucheth hem / and bad / god sholde hem blesse
 And made al siker ynow / with holynesse 1708
 ¶ Thus been they wedded / with solempnitee
 And at the laste / sitteth he and she
 With oother worthy folk / vp on the deys
 Al ful of ioye and blisse / is the paleys 1712
 And ful of Instrumentz / and of vitaille
 The mooste deyntheuous / of al Ytaille
 Bi-forn hem stooode swiche Instrumentz of swich soun
 That Orpheus / nof Thebes Amphioun 1716
 Ne maden neuere / swich a melodye
 At euery cours / thanne cam loud mynstraleye
 That neuere tromped / Ioab / for to heere
 Ne he Theodomas / yet half so cleere 1720
 At Thebes / whan the Citee was in doute [leaf 144]
 Bacus / the wyn hem shenketh al aboute
 And Venus laugheth / vp on euery wight
 ffor Ianuarie / was bicomme hir knyght 1724
 And wolde / bothe assayen his corage
 In libertee / and eek in mariage
 And with hir firbrond / in hir hand aboute
 Daunceth bifore the bryde / and al the route 1728
 And certainly / I dar right wel seye this
 Ymeneus / that god of weddyng is
 Say neuere his lyf / so murye a wedded man
 Hoold thow thy pees / thou Poete Marcian 1732
 That writest vs / that ilke weddyng murye
 Of hire Philologie / and he Mercurie
 And of the songes / that the Muses songe
 To smal / is bothe thy penne / and eek thy tonge 1736
 ffor to discryuen / of this mariage
 Whan tendre youthe / hath wedded stoupyng age
 Ther is swich murthe / that it may nat be writen
 Assayeth it your self / than may ye witen 1740

If that I lye or noon / in this matere
 ¶ Mayus that sit' with so benygne a cheere
 Hir to biholde / it semed ffairye
 Queene Ester / looked neuere with swich an eye 1744
 On Assuer / so meke a look hath she
 I may yow nat deuyse / al hir beautee
 But thus muche / of hir beautee / telle I may
 That she was lyk' the brighte morwe of May 1748
 ffulfild / of alle beautee and plesaunce
 ¶ This Ianuarie / is rauysshed in a traunce
 At euery tyme / he looked on hir face
 But in his herte / he gan hir to manace 1752
 That he that nyght' in armes wolde hir streyne
 Harder than euere / Parys dide Eleyne
 But nathelees / yet hadde he gret pitee
 That thilke nyght' offenden hire moste he 1756
 And thoghte allas / o tendre creature
 Now wolde god / ye myghte wel endure
 Al my corage / it is so sharpe and kene
 :I am agast' ye shul it nat sustene 1760
 [ffor'] god forbede / that I dide al my myght' [¹ *Rats. If 144, bk*]
 Now wolde god / that it were woxen nyght'
 And þat the nyght' wolde laste euere mo
 I wolde / that al this peple were ago 1764
 And fynally / he dooth al his labour
 As he best myghte / sauynge his honour
 To haste hem fro the mete / in subtil wise
 The tyme cam / þat reson was to rise 1768
 And after that men daunce / and drynken faste
 And Spices / al aboute the hous they caste
 And ful of ioye and blisse / is euery man
 Al but a Squyer / highte Damyan 1772
 Which carf biforn the knyght' ful many a day
 He was so rauysshed / on his lady May
 That for the verray peyne / he was ny wood
 Almoost he swelte / and swowned as he stood 1776

So sore hath Venus / hurt hym with hir brond
 As that she baar it^t dauncyng in hir hond
 And to his bed / he wente hym hastily
 Namooore of hym / at this tyme speke .I 1780
 But ther I lete hym / wepe ynow and pleyne
 Til fresshe May / wol rewen on his peyne
 ¶ O. *perilous* fyr / that in the bed straw bredeth Auctor
 O. *famulier* foo / that his *seruice* bedeth 1784
 O. *seruant* traytour / false homly hewe
 Lyk to the Neddre in bosom / sly vntrewe
 God shilde vs alle / from youre aqueyntance
 O Ianuarie / dronken in plesance 1788
 In mariage / se how thy Damyan
 Thyn owene Squyer / and thy born man
 Entendeth / for to do thee vileynye
 God grante thee / thyn homly fo espye 1792
 ffor in this world / nys worse pestilence
 Than homly fo / alday in thy *presence*
 ¶ *Parfourned* hath the sonne / his Ark^t diurne [Latin note,
 No lenger / may the body of hym soiurne 1796 p. 477]
 On thorisonte / as in that latitude
 Night with his mantel / that is derk and rude
 Gan ouersprede / Themysperies aboute
 ffor which / departed is / this lusty route 1800
 ffor Ianuarie / with thank on euery syde [leaf 145]
 Hom to hir houses / lustily they ryde
 Wher as they doon hir thynges / as hem leste
 And whan they say hir tyme / go to reste 1804
 ¶ Soone after *pat*^t this hasty Ianuarie
 Wol go to bedde / he wol no lenger tarie
 He drynketh Ypocras / Clarree and Vernage
 Of Spices hoote / tencressen his corage 1808
 And many a letuarie / hadde he ful fyn
 Swich as the cursed Monk/ daun Constantyn
 Hath writen / in his book^t De coitu
 To eten hem alle / he nas no thyng eschu 1812

And to his pryuee freendes / thus seyde he
 ffor goddes loue / as soone as it may be
 Lat voyden al this hous / in curteis wise
 And they han doon / right as he wol deuyse 1816
 Men drynken / and the trauers drawe anon
 The bryde was broght a bedde / as stille as stoon
 And whan the bed / was with the preest yblessed
 Out of the chambre / hath euery wight hym dressed 1820
 And Ianuarie / hath faste in armes take
 His fresshe May / his Paradys / his make
 He lulleth hire / he kisseth hire / ful ofte
 With thilke bristles / of his berd vnsofte 1824
 Lyk to the Skyn of houndfyssh / sharpe as brere
 ffor he was shaue al newe / in his manere
 He rubbeth hire / aboute hir tendre face
 And seyde thus / allas I moot trespase 1828
 To yow my Spouse / and yow gretly offende
 Er tyme come / þat I wol down descende
 But natheles / considereth this quod he
 Ther nys no werkman / what so euere he be 1832
 That may bothe / werke wel and hastily
 This wol be doon / at leyser parfitly
 It is no fors / how longe þat we pleye
 In trewe wedlok¹ coupled be we tweye 1836
 And blessed be the yok¹ / þat we been Inne
 ffor in [oure] actes / we mow do no synne
 A man / may do no synne with his wyf
 Ne hurte hym seluen / with his owene knyf/ 1840
 [ffor¹] we han leue / to pleye vs by the lawe [¹ *Rats.* leaf 145, bk]
¹[T]hus laboureth he / til that the day gan dawe
 And thanne / he taketh a sope in fyn Clarree
 And vp right in his bed / thanne sitteth he 1844
 And after that he song ful loude and clere
 And kiste his wyf / and made wantown cheere
 He was al coltyssh / ful of ragerye
 And ful of Iargon / as a flekked pye 1848

The slakke skyn / aboute his nekke shaketh
 Whil þat he song/ so chaunteth he and craketh
 But god woot what þat may thoghte in hir herte
 Whan she hym saw / vp sittynge in his sherte 1852
 In his nyght cappe / and with his nekke lene
 She preiseth nat his pleyng worth a bene
 Thanne seyde he thus / my reste wol I take
 Now day is come / I may no lenger wake 1856
 And down he leyde his heed / and sleepe til pryne
 And afterward / whan þat he saw his tyme
 Vp riseth Ianuarie / but fresshe May
 Heeld hir chambre / vn to the fourthe day 1860
 As vsage is of wyues / for the beste
 ffor euery labour / som tyme moot han reste
 Or ellis / longe may he nat endure
 This is to seyn / no lyues creature 1864
 Be it fissh / or bryd / or beest or man
 Now wol I speke / of woful damyan
 That langwissheth for loue / as ye shul heere
 Ther fore / I speke to hym / in this manere 1868
 ¶ I seye / o sely Damyan allas Auctor
 Answere to my demaunde / as in this cas
 How shaltow / to thy lady fresshe May
 Telle thy wo / she wol alwey sey nay 1872
 Eek if thow speke / she wol thy wo biwrewe
 God be thyn helpe / I kan no bettre seye
 This syke damyan / in Venus fyr venus . God of loue./
 So brenneth / that he dyeth for desyr [in a later hand.]
 ffor which / he putte his lyf in auenture
 No lenger myghte he / in this wise endure
 But priuely / a penner gan he borwe
 And in a lettre / wroot he al his sorwe 1880
 In manere of a compleynt or a lay [leaf 146]
 Vn to his faire / fresshe lady May
 And in a purs of sylk heng on his sherte
 He hath it put and leyd it at his herte 1884

- ¶ The moone þat at Noon / was thilke day
 That Ianuarie / hath wedded fresshe May
 In two of Taur / was in to Cancre gliden
 So longe hath Mayus / in hir chambre abyden 1888
 As custume is / vn to thise nobles alle
 A bryde / shal nat eten in the halle
 Til dayes foure / or thre dayes atte leeste
 Ypassed ben / thanne lat hir go to feste 1892
- ¶ The fourthe day complet' fro noon to noon
 Whan þat the heighe masse / was y-doon
 In halle / sit this Ianuarie and May
 As fressh / as in the brighte Someres day 1896
 And so bifel / how that this goode man
 Remembred hym / vp on this Damyan
 And seyde / Seynte Marie how may it be
 That Damyan / entendeth nat to me 1900
 Is he ay syk / or how may this bityde
- ¶ Hys Squyers / whiche þat stoden ther bisyde
 Excused hym / by cause of his siknesse
 Which letted hym / to doon his bisynesse 1904
 Noon oother cause / myghte make hym tarye
- ¶ That me forthynketh / quod this Ianuarye
 He is a gentil Squyer / by my trouthe
 If þat he deyde / it were harm and routhe 1908
 He is as wys / discret and eek secrete
 As any man / I woot of his degree
 And ther-to manly / and eek seruysable
 And for to be a thrifty man / right able 1912
 But after mete / as soone as euere I may
 I wol my self visite hym / and eek May
 To do hym / al the confort þat I kan
 And for that word / hym blessed euery man 1916
 That of his bountee / and his gentillesse
 He wolde so / conforten in siknesse
 His Squyer / for it was a gentil dede
- ¶ Dame quod this Ianuarie / tak good hede 1920

- [At af¹]ter mete / ye with youre wommen alle
 [Wh¹]an ye han ben in chambre / out of this halle <sup>[¹ *Rots.* ff
146, back]</sup>
 [T¹]hat alle ye go / to this Damyan
 Dooth hym disport^t he is a gentil man 1924
 And telleth hym / þat I wol hym visite
 Hauē I no thyng^t but rested me a lite
 And spede yow faste / for I wol abide
 Til that ye slepe / faste by my syde 1928
 And with that word / he gan to hym to calle
 A Squier / that was Marchal of his halle
 And tolde hym *certein* thynges / what he wolde
 ¶ This fresshe May / hath streight hir wey yholde 1932
 With alle hir wommen / vn to Damyan
 Doun by his beddes syde / sit she than
 Confortyng hym / as goodly as she may
 ¶ This Damyan / whan þat his tyme he say 1936
 In secree wise / his purs and eek his bille
 In which / þat he ywriten hadde his wille
 Hath put in to hir hand / with oute moore
 Saue þat he siketh / wonder depe and soore 1940
 And softely to hire / right thus seyde he
 Merey / and þat ye nat discouere me
 ffor I am deed / if þat this thyng be kyd
 This purs hath she / in with hir bosom hyd 1944
 And wente hir wey / ye gete namoore of me
 But vn to Ianuarie / ycomen is she
 That on his beddes syde / sit ful softe
 And taketh hire / and kisseth hire ful ofte 1948
 And leyde hym doun to slepe / and that anon
 She feyned hire / as þat she moste gon
 Ther as ye woot^t that euery wight moot nede
 And whan she of this bille / hath taken hede 1952
 She rente it al to cloutes / at the laste
 And in the pryuee / softely it caste
 ¶ Who studieth now / but faire fresshe May
 Adoun / by olde Ianuarie she lay 1956

That sleepe / til þat the coghe hath hym awaked
 Anon he preyde / strepen hire al naked
 He wolde of hire he seyde / han som plesaunce
 He seyde / hir clothes / dide hym encombrance 1960
 And she obeyeth / be hir lief or looth [leaf 147]
 But lest þat precious folk / be with me wrooth
 How þat he wroghte / I dar nat to yow telle
 Or wheithir / it thoughte Paradys / or helle 1964
 But heere I lete hem werken / in hir wise
 Til euensong rong and þat they moste arise
 Were it by destynnee / or by auenture
 Were it by Influence / or by nature 1968
 Or constellaciō / that in swich estat
 The heuene stood / that tyme fortunat
 As for to putte a bille / of Venus werkes
 ffor alle thyng hath tyme / as seyn thise clerkes 1972
 To any womman / for to gete hir loue
 I kan nat seye / but grete god aboue
 That knoweth / þat noon Act is causelees
 He deme of al / for I wol holde my pees 1976
 ¶ But sooth is this / how þat this fresshe May
 Hath taken / swich impressiō that day
 Of pitee / on this syke Damyan
 That from hir herte / she ne dryue kan 1980
 The remembrance / for to doon hym ese
 Certeyn thoghte she / whom þat this thyng displese
 I rekke nat for here I hym assure
 To loue hym best of any creature 1984
 Thogh he namoore hadde / than his sherte
 Loo / pitee renneth soone / in gentil herte
 ¶ Heere may ye se / how excellent franchise
 In wommen is / whan they hem narwe auyse 1988
 Som tirañt is / as ther be many oon
 That hath an herte / as hard as is a stoon
 Which wolde / han leten steruen / in the place
 Wel rather / than han graunted hym hir grace 1992

And hem reioysen / in hir cruel pryde
 And rekke nat to been an homycide
 ¶ This gentil May / fulfilled of pitee
 Right of hir hand / a lettre maked she 1996
 In which she graunteth hym / hir *verray* grace
 Ther lakketh noght oonly / but day and place
 Wher that she myghte / vn to his lust suffice
 ffor it shal be / right as he wol deuysen 2000
 [And ¹] whan she saw hir tyme / vp on a day [¹ *Rats. lf 147, bk*]
 [To ¹] visite this Damyan / goth May
 And subtilly / this lettre doun she threste
 Vnder his pilwe / rede it if hym leste 2004
 She taketh hym by the hand / and harde hym twiste
 So secrely / that no wight of it wiste
 And bad hym be al hool / and forth she wente
 To Ianuarie / whan *pat* he for hir sente 2008
 ¶ Vp riseth Damyan / the nexte morwe
 Al passed was / his siknesse and his sorwe
 He kembeth hym / he prayneth hym and pyketh
 He dooth / al that his lady lust and lyketh 2012
 And eek to Ianuarie / he goth as lowe
 As euer dide / a dogge for the bowe
 He is so plesant vn to euery man
 ffor craft is al / who so *pat* do it kan 2016
 That euery wight is fayn to speke hym good
 And fully / in his ladyes *grace* he stood
 Thus lete I Damyan / aboute his nede
 And in my tale / forth I wol *procede* 2020
 ¶ *Somme* clerkes / holden *pat* felicitee
 Stant in delit and therfore *certeyn* he
 This noble Ianuarie / with al his myght
 In honeste wise / as longeth to a knyght 2024
 Shoope hym to lyue / ful deliciously
 His housyng^t his array / as honestly
 To his degree / was maked / as a kynges
 Amonges othere / of his honeste thynges 2028

He made a gardyn / walled al with stoon
 So fair a gardyn / woot I nowher noon
 ffor out of doute / I verrailly suppose
 That he / þat wroot the Romance of the Rose 2032
 Ne koude of it^t the beautee wel deuyse
 Ne Priapus / ne myghte nat suffise
 Thogh he be god of gardyns / for to telle
 The beautee / of the gardyn and the welle 2036
 That stood vnder a laurer / alwey grene
 fful ofte tyme / he Pluto and his queene
 Proserpina / and al hir ffairye
 Disporten hem / and maken melodye 2040
 Aboute that welle / and daunced as men tolde [leaf 148]
 This noble knyght^t this Ianuarie the olde
 Swich deyntee hath / in it to walke and pleye
 That he wol no wight^t suffre bere the keye 2044
 Saue he hym self^t for of the smal wyket^t
 He bar alwey / of siluer a Clyket^t
 With which / whan þat hym leste / he it vnshette
 And whan he wolde / paye his wyf hir dette 2048
 In somer seson / thider wolde he go
 And May his wyf / and no wight but they two
 And thynges / whiche þat were nat doon abedde
 He in the gardyn / parfourned hem and spedde 2052
 And in this wise / many a murye day
 Lyued this Ianuarie / and fresshe May
 But worldly ioye / may nat alwey dure
 To Ianuarie / ne to no creature 2056
 ¶ O. sodeyn hape / o. thow ffortune vnstable Auctor
 Lyk to the Scorpion / so deceyuable
 That flaterest *with* thyn heed / whan thow wolt styngre
 Thy tayl is deeth / thurgh thyn enuenymynge 2060
 O. brotil ioye / o. swete venym queynte
 O. Monstre / that so subtilly kanst peynte
 Thy yiftes / vnder hewe of stedefastnesse
 That thow deceyuest^t bothe moore and lesse 2064

Why hastow Ianuarie / thus deceyued
 That haddest hym / for thy fulle freend receyued
 And now thow hast biraft hym / bothe his eyen
 ffor sorwe of which / desireth he to dyen 2068
 Allas / this noble Ianuarie free
 Amydde his lust' and his prosperitee
 Is woxen blynd / and that al sodeynly
 He wepeth / and he wailleth pitously 2072
 And ther with al / the fyr of Ialousye
 Lest that his wyf/ sholde falle in som folye
 So brente his herte / þat he wolde fayn
 That som man / bothe hire and hym had slayn 2076
 ffor neither after his deeth / ne in his lyf
 Ne wolde he / þat she were loue ne wyf
 But euere lyue as wydwe / in clothes blake
 Soul as the turtle / that lost hath hir make 2080
 [Bu¹]t atte laste / after a Monthe or tweye [¹ *Rats.* leaf 148, bk]
 [H¹]is sorwe gan aswage / sooth to seye
 ffor whan he wiste / it may noon oother be
 He paciently / took his aduersitee 2084
 Sane out of doute / he may nat forgoon
 That he nas Ialous / euere moore in oon
 Which Ialousye / it was so outrageous
 That neither in halle / ne in noon oother hous 2088
 Ne in noon oother place / neuer the mo
 He nolde suffre hire / for to ryde or go
 But if þat he / hadde hond on hir alway
 ffor which ful ofte / wepeth fresshe May 2092
 That loueth Damyan / so benygne
 That she moot' outhur dyen sodeynly
 Or ellis / she moot han hym as hir leste
 She wayteth / whan hir herte wolde breste 2096
 ¶ Vp on that oother syde / Damyan
 Bicomen is / the sorwefulleste man
 That euere was / for neither nyght ne day
 Ne myghte he speke a word to fresshe May 2100

As to his purpos / of no swich matere
 But if þat Ianuarie / moste it heere
 That hadde an hand / vp on hire euere mo
 But nathelees / by writyng to and fro 2104
 And pryuee signes / wiste he what she mente
 And she knew eek / the fyn of his entente
 ¶ O Ianuaire / what myghte it thee auaille
 Thow myghtest se / as fer as Shippes saille 2108
 ffor as good / is blynd deceyued be
 As to be deceyued / whan a man may se
 Lo Argus / which þat hadde an hundred eyen
 ffor al that euere / he koude poure or pryen 2112
 Yet was he blent and god woot so been mo
 That weneth wisly / that it be nat so
 Passe ouer is an ese / and sey namoore
 ¶ This fresshe May / that I spak of so yooore 2116
 In warm wex / hath printed the Clyket
 That Ianuarie bar / of that smale wyket
 By which / in to his gardyn / ofte he wente
 And Damyan / that knew al his entente 2120
 The Clyket countrefeted pryuely [leaf 149]
 Ther nys namoore to seye / but hastily
 Som wonder / by this Cliket shal bityde
 Which ye shal heren / if ye wol abyde 2124
 ¶ O noble Ouyde / wel sooth seistow god woot
 What sleighte is it / thogh it be long and hoot
 That he nel fynde it out in som manere
 By Pyramus and Thesbe / may men lere 2128
 Thogh they were kept ful longe / streyte ouer al
 They been acorded / rownyng thurgh a wal
 Ther no wight koude / han founde out swich a sleighte
 But now to purpos / er that dayes eghte 2132
 Were passed / er the Monthe of Iuyl bifille
 That Ianuarie / hath caught so greet a wille
 Thurgh eggyng of his wyf / hym for to pleye
 In his gardyn / and no wight but they tweye 2136

That in a morwe / vn to his May seith he
 Rys vp my wyf/ my loue / my lady free
 The Turtles voys is herd / my dowue swete
 The wynter is goon / with reynes wete 2140
 Com forth now / with thyne eyen Columbyn
 How fairer been thy brestes / than is wyn
 The gardyn / is enclosed al aboute
 Com forth my white spouse / out of doute 2144
 Thow hast me wounded in myn herte / O wyf
 No spot of thee / ne knew I al my lyf
 Com forth / and lat vs taken oure desport
 I chees thee / for my wyf/ and my confort 2148
 ¶ Swiche olde lewed wordes / vsed he
 On Damyan / a signe made she
 That he sholde go biforn / with his Clyket
 This Damyan thanne / hath opned the wyket 2152
 And in he stirte / and that in swich manere
 That no wight myghte it se / neither yheere
 And stille he sit / vnder a bussh anon
 ¶ This Ianuarie / as blynd as is a stoon 2156
 With Mayus in his hand / and no wight mo
 In to his fresshe gardyn / is ago
 And clapte to / the wyket sodeynly
 Now wyf quod he / here nys but thow and .I. 2160
 [Th¹]at art the creature / that I best loue [1 *Eats.* leaf 149, bk]
 ffor by that lord / that sit in heuene aboue
 Leuere ich hadde / to dyen on a knyf
 Than thee offende / trewe deere wyf 2164
 ffor goddes sake / thenk how I thee chees
 Noght for no coueitise doutelees
 But oonly / for the loue I hadde to thee
 And thogh þat I be old / and may nat see 2168
 Beth to me trewe / and I wol telle yow why
 Thre thynges certes / shal ye wynne ther by
 ¶ ffirst loue of Crist and to your self honour
 And al myn heritage / toun and tour 2172

I yeue it yow / maketh chartres as ye leste
 This shal be doon to morwe / er sonne reste
 So wisly / god my soule / brynge in blisse
 I pray yow first^t in couenant ye me kisse 2176
 And thogh þat I be Ialous / wyt me noght^t
 Ye been so depe / emprinted in my thoght^t
 That whan þat I / considere youre beautee
 And ther with al / the vnlikly elde of me 2180
 I may noght certes / thogh I sholde dye
 fforbere / to been out of youre compaignye
 ffor verray loue / this is with outen doute
 Now kys me wyf^t and lat vs rome aboute 2184
 ¶ This fresshe May / whan she thise wordes herde
 Benygnely / to Ianuarie answerde
 But first and forward / she bigan to wepe
 I haue quod she / a soule for to kepe 2188
 As wel as ye / and also myn honour
 And of my wifhod / thilke tendre flour
 Which þat I haue / assured in youre hond
 Whan þat the preest^t to yow my body bond 2192
 Wher fore / I wol answeere in this manere
 By the leue of yow / my lord so deere
 I pray to god / þat neuere dawe the day
 That I ne sterue / as foule as womman may 2196
 If euere I do / vn to my kyn that shame
 Or ellis / I empeyre so my name
 That I be fals / and if I do that lakke
 Do strepe me / and put me in a sakke 2200
 And in the nexte Ryuer / do me drenche [leaf 150]
 I am a gentil womman / and no wenche
 Why speke ye thus / but men been euere vntrewe
 And wommen haue reproue / of yow ay newe 2204
 Ye han / noon oother contenance I leue
 But speke to vs / of vntrust^t and repreue
 ¶ And with that word / she saw wher Damyant
 Sat in the busshe / and cogen she bigan 2208

And with hir fynger / signes made she
 That Damyan / sholde clymbe vp on a tree
 That charged was with fruyt^t and vp he wente
 ffor verrailly / he knew al hir entente 2212
 And euery signe / þat she koude make
 Wel bet than Ianuarie / hir owene make
 ffor in a lettre / she hadde told hym al
 Of this matere / how he werken shal 2216
 And thus I lete hym sitte / vp on the purye
 And Ianuarie and May / romynge murye
 ¶ Bright was the day / and blew the firmament^t
 Phebus hath of gold / his stremys down ysent^t 2220
 To gladen euery flour / with his warmnesse
 He was that tyme / in Geminis as I gesse
 But lilit / fro his declynacioñ
 Of Cancer / Iouis exaltacioñ 2224
 And so bifel / that brighte morwe tyde
 That in that gardyn / in the ferther syde
 Pluto / that is the¹ kyng^t of ffairye [1 the later]
 And many a lady / in his compaignye 2228
 ffolwyng his wyf / the queene Proserpyne
² Whos answer hath doon many a man pyne² [²⁻² in a later hand]
 ¶ Whil that she gadrede / floures in the mede
 In Claudyan / ye may the stories rede 2232
 How in his grysly Carte / he hir sette
 This kyng of ffairye / thanne adown hym sette
 Vp on a bench of turues / fressh and grene
 And right anon / thus seyde he to his queene 2236
 ¶ My wyf quod he / ther may no wight sey nay
 Thexperience / so proueth euery day
 The treson / which þat womman dooth to man
 Ten hundred thousand / tellen I kan 2240
 [N³]otable / of youre vntrouthe and brotelnesse [³ Rats. lf 150, bk]
 O Salomon wys / and richest of richesse
 ffulfild of Sapience / and of worldly glorie
 fful worthy been thy wordes / to memorie 2244

To euery wight that wit and reson kan
 Thus preyseth he yet the boñtee of man
 ¶ Amonges a thousand men / yet foond I oon
 But of wommen alle / foond I noon 2248
 ¶ Thus seith the kyng þat knoweth youre wikkednesse
 And Ihesus filius Syrak as I gesse
 Ne speketh of yow / but selde reuerence
 A wilde fyr / and corrupt pestilence 2252
 So falle vp on youre bodyes / yet to nyght
 Ne se ye noght this honorable knyght
 By cause allas / þat he is blynd and old
 His owene man / shal make hym Cokewold 2256
 Lo where he sit the lechour in the tree
 Now wol I graunten / of my magestee
 Vn to this olde / blynde worthy knyght
 That he shal haue ayein / his eyen syght 2260
 Whan þat his wyf wolde doon hym vileynye
 Thanne shal he knowen / al hir harlotrye
 Bothe in repreue of hire / and othere mo
 ¶ Ye shal quod Proserpyne / wol ye so 2264
 Now by my modres sires soule / I swere
 That I shal yeuen hire / suffisant answere
 And alle wommen after / for hir sake
 That thogh they be / in any gilt ytake 2268
 With face bold / they shul hem self excuse
 And bere hem down / that wolde hem accuse
 ffor lakke of answeere / noon of hem shal dyen
 Al hadde man seyn a thyng with bothe his eyen 2272
 Yet shal we wommen / visagen it hardily
 And wepe and swere / and chide subtilly
 So that ye men / shul been as lewed as gees
 What rekketh me / of youre auctoritees 2276
 ¶ I woot wel / þat this Iew / this Salomon
 fand of vs wommen / folyes many oon
 But thogh þat he / ne fand no good womman
 Yet hath ther founde / many another man 2280

Wommen ful trewe / ful goode and vertuous [leaf 151r]
 Witnesse on hem / that dwelle in Cristes hous
 With martirdom / they proued hir constaunce
 The Romayn geestes / eek maken remembraunce 2284
 Of many a verray / trewe wyf also
 But sire ne be nat wrooth / al be it so
 Thogh þat he seyde / he foond no good womman
 I pray yow / taak the sentence of the man 2288
 He mente thus / þat in souerayn boñtee
 Nys noon but god / but neither he ne she
 ¶ Ey for verray god / that nys but oon
 What make ye / so muche of Salomon 2292
 What' thogh / he made a temple goddes hous
 What' thogh he were riche and glorious
 So made he eek / a temple / of false goddys
 How myghte he do a thyng' þat moore forbode is' 2296
 Pardee / as faire / as ye his name emplastre
 He was a lechour / and an ydolastre
 And in his elde / he verray god forsookt'
 And if god ne hadde / as seith the book' 2300
 Yspared hym / for his fadres sake / he sholde
 Haue lost his regne / rather than he wolde
 I sette right noght' of al the vileynye
 That ye of wommen write / a Boterflye 2304
 I am a womman / nedes moot I speke
 Or ellis swelle / til myn herte breke
 ffor sithen he seyde / þat we been Iangleresses
 As euere hool / I mote brouke my tresses 2308
 I shal nat spare / for no curteisye
 To speke hym harm / þat wolde vs vileynye
 ¶ Dame quod this Pluto / be no lenger wrooth
 I yeue it vp / but sith I swoor myn ooth 2312
 That I wolde graunten hym / his sighte ayein
 My word shal stonde / I warne yow certeyn
 I am a kyng' it sit me noght to lye
 ¶ And I quod she / a queene of ffairye 2316

Hir answer shal she haue / I vndertake
 Lat vs namoore wordes / her of make
 ffor sothe / I wol no lenger yow contrarie
 ¶ Now lat vs / turne agayn to Ianuarie 2320
 [Th¹]at in the gardyn / with his faire May [¹ Rats. ff 131, bk]
 Syngeth ful murier / than the Papeiay
 Yow loue I best and shal and oother noon
 So longe / aboute the Aleyes is he goon 2324
 Til he was come / agayns thilke pirye
 Wher as this Damyan / sitteth ful myrye
 An heigh / among the fresshe leues grene
 ¶ This fresshe May / that is so bright and shene 2328
 Gan for to syke / and seyde allas my syde
 Now sire quod she / for aught þat may bityde
 I moste han / of the perys þat I se
 Or I moot dye / so sore longeth me 2332
 To eten / of the smale perys grene
 Help for hir loue / þat is of heuene queene
 I telle yow wel / a womman in my plit
 May han to fruyt / so gret an appetit 2336
 That she may dyen / but she of it haue
 ¶ Allas quod he / þat I ne hadde here a knaue
 That koude clymbe / allas allas quod he
 ffor I am blynd / ye sire no fors quod she 2340
 ¶ But wolde ye / vouche sauf / for goddes sake
 The pirye inwith youre armes / for to take
 ffor wel I woot þat ye mystruste me
 Thanne sholde I clymbe / wel ynow quod she 2344
 So I my foot myghte sette vp on youre bak
 ¶ Certes quod he / ther on shal be no lak
 Mighte I yow helpen / with myn herte blood
 He stoupeth down / and on his bak she stood 2348
 And caughte hir by a twiste / and vp she goth
 Ladys I pray yow / þat ye be nat wroth
 I kan nat glose / .I a rude man
 And sodeynly / anon this Damyan 2352

Can pullen vp the smok / and in he throng^t
 ¶ And whan þat Pluto / saugh this grete wrong^t
 To Ianuarie / he yaf agayn his sighte
 And made hym see / as wel as euere he myghte 2356
 And whan that he / hadde caught his sighte agayn
 Ne was ther neuere man / of thyng so fayn
 But on his wyf/ his thoght was euere mo
 Vn to the tree / he caste his eyen two 2360
 And say þat Damyan / his wyf had dressed [leaf 152]
 In swich manere / it may nat ben expressed
 But if I wolde speken / vncurteisly
 And vp he yaf/ a roryng and a cry 2364
 As dooth the moder / whan the child shal dye
 Out help / allas / harrow / he gan to crye
 O. stronge lady stoore / what dostow
 ¶ And she answerde / sire what eyleth yow 2368
 Haue pacience and reson / in youre mynde
 I haue yow holpe / on bothe youre eyen blynde
 Vp peril of my soule / .I shal nat lyen
 As me was taught^t to heele with youre eyen 2372
 Was no thyng bet^t to make yow to se
 Than strugle *with* a man / vp on a tree
 God woot^t I dide it in ful good entente
 ¶ Strugled quod he / ye algate In it wente 2376
 God yeue yow bothe / on shames deth to dyen
 He swyued thee / I saw it *with* myne eyen
 And ellis / be I hanged by the hals
 ¶ Thanne is quod she / my medicyne al fals 2380
 ffor *certainly* / if þat ye myghte se
 Ye wolde nat seyn / thise wordes vn to me
 Ye han som glymsynge / and no parfit sighte
 ¶ I se quod he / as wel as euere I myghte 2384
 Thonked be god / with bothe myne eyen two
 And by my trouthe / me thoughte he dide thee so
 ¶ Ye maze maze / goode Sire quod she
 This thank haue I / for I haue maad yow se 2388

Allas quod she / þat euere I was so kynde
 Now dame quod he / lat al passe out of mynde
 Com doun my lief/ and if I haue myssayd
 God help me so / as I am yuele apayd 2392
 But by my fadres soule / I wende haue seyn
 How þat this Damyan / hadde by thee leyn
 And þat thy Smok / hadde leyn vp on his bryst
 ¶ Ye sire quod she / ye may wene as yow lyst 2396
 But sire / a man that waketh out of his sleepe
 He may nat sodeynly / wel taken keepe
 Vp on a thyng^t ne seen it parfitly
 Til that he be / adawed verrailly 2400
 [¹ Rig]ht so a man / that longe hath blynd ybe [¹ Rots. leaf
 [¹ N]e may nat sodeynly / so wel yse 152, back]
 ffirst whan his sighte / is newe come ageyn
 As he þat hath / a day or two yseyn 2404
 Til þat youre sighte / ysatled be a while
 Ther may ful many a sighte yow bigile
 Beth war I pray yow / for by heuene kyng^t
 fful many a man / weneth to se a thyng^t 2408
 And it is al another / than it semeth
 He þat mysconceyueth / he mysdemeth
 And with that word / she lepte doun fro the tree
 ¶ This Ianuarie / who is glad but he 2412
 He kisseth hire / and clippeth hire ful ofte
 And on hir wombe / he stroketh hire ful softe
 And to his Palays / hom he hath hire lad
 Now goode men / I pray yow to be glad 2416
 Thus endeth here / my tale of Ianuarie
 God blesse vs / and his moder Seinte Marie . Amen . 2418
 ¶ Here is ended the Marchantes tale / of Ianuarie

¶ Here folwen the Wordes of the Worthy Hoost^[leaf 133] to
the ffrankeleyn.

[Blank of ten lines in the MS.]

EY goddes mercy / seyde oure Hoost^{tho} to
Now swich a wyf / I prey god kepe me fro 2420
Lo whiche sleighes / and subtiltees
In wommen ben / for ay as bisy as bees
Ben they / vs sely men for to deceyue
And from a sooth / euere wol they weyue 2424
By this Marchantes tale / it preueth weel
But doutelees / as trewe as any steel
I haue a wyf / thogh þat she poore be
But of hir tonge / a labbyng shrewe is she 2428
And yit she hath / an heep of vices mo
Ther-of no fors / lat alle swiche thynges go
But wite ye what in conseil be it seyde
Me reweth soore / I am vn to hire teyd 2432
ffor and I sholde / rekenen euery vice
Which þat she hath / ywis I were to nyce
And cause why / it sholde reported be
And toold to hire / of somme of this meynee 2436
Of whom s / it nedeth nat for to declare
Syn wommen / konnen oute swich chaffare
And eek my wit / suffiseth nat ther to
To tellen al / wherfore my tale is do 2440

[No break in the MS.]



SIDE-NOTES TO THE MERCHANT'S TALE.

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 445, l. 1311. ¶ vxor est diligenda / quia donum dei est Ihesus filius Syrac : domus & diuicie dantur a parentibus / a domino autem proprie / vxor bona vel prudens. [MS, leaf 138, back.]

p. 445, l. 1327. ¶ fficiamus ei adiutorem / & ex[tracta costa de] corpore Ade fecit Euam / & dix[it pro vxore] relinquet homo patrem & matrem & [adherebit &c.] et erunt duo / in carne vna. [MS, leaf 139.]

p. 445, l. 1335. Vna caro vnum Animum in omni Adversitate cogitat/. [MS, leaf 139, in a later hand.]

p. 446, l. 1362. ¶ Iacob enim per consilium matris sue Rebece &cetera. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 446, l. 1368. Iudith &cetera / de manibus Oloferni. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 446, l. 1369. ¶ Et Abigail per suum bonum consilium / virum suum Nabal / ab ira dauid liberauit/. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 446, l. 1371. ¶ Ester &cetera Iudeos per bonum consilium simul cum Mardocheo in regno Assueri &cetera. [MS, lf 139, bk.]

p. 446, l. 1376. ¶ Seneca / sicut nichil est superius benigna coniuge / ita nichil est crudelius infesta muliere. [MS, lf 139, bk.]

p. 446, l. 1378. ¶ Cato // vxoris linguam / si frugi est, ferre memento/ [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 447, l. 1383. ¶ Apostolus Paulus Ad Ephesianos // Diligite vxores vestras sicut christus dilexit ecclesiam &cetera. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 447, l. 1384. Apostolus // Ita viri debent diligere vxores suas vt corpora sua / quia qui suam vxorem diligit se ipsam diligit/ nemo vnquam carnem suam odio habuit/ set nutrit & fouet eam / et ¶ postea / vnusquisque suam vxorem sicut ¶ se ipsam diligit. [MS, leaf 139, back.]

p. 458, l. 1795. [Ar]ke diurne . quidam circulus [...] . . . meto vocatur Zodiacus [...] . . . sol cotidie cressit. [MS, leaf 145, back, in a later hand and faint ink.]

GROUP F. FRAGMENT VII.

§ 1. THE SQUIRE'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ Sire ffrankeleyn / com neer/ if it youre wille be [on 153]
And sey vs a tale / for certes ye
konnen ther on / as muche as any man
¶ Nay sire quod he / but I wol seye as I kan 4
[¹W]ith hertly wyl / for I wol nat rebelle [¹ Rats. leaf 153, back]
Agayns youre wyl / a tale wol I telle
Haue me excused / if þat I speke amys
My wyl is good / and lo my tale is this 8

¶ Explicit 8

SIDE-NOTES TO THE FRANKLIN'S TALE.

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 500, l. 722. ¶ Vnde Persius ¶ Nec f[onte] caballino . . .
parnaso meme. [MS, leaf 154.]

p. 518, l. 1369. ¶ 30^a Atheniensium tiranni [cum Phidonem]
necassent/ in conuiuio filia[s eius virgi]nes ad se venire iusserunt/
& s[cotorum mo]re nudari / ac super pauimentu[m patris]
sanguine cruentatas inpudicis ge[stibus] ludere / que paulisper
dissimulato [dolo]re / cum tumultentos conuiuas cernerent[t]
quasi ad requisita nature egredientes inuicem se complexe precipi-
tauerun[t] in puteum vt virginitate morte seruareu[t]. [MS, leaf
162.]

p. 519, l. 1395. ¶ Singulas has historias & plur[es] hanc
materiam concernentes reci[tat] beatus Ieronimus contra Iouini-
an[um] in primo suo libro, capitulo .39. [MS, leaf 162.]

¶ Here bigynneth the ffrankeleyns tale [on leaf 153, bk]

T

[THE PROEM.]

Hise olde gentil Britons / in hir dayes
 Of diuerse auentures / maden layes
 Rymeyed / in hir firste Briton tonge
 Whiche layes / with hir Instrumentz they songe 712
 Or ellis redden hem / for hire plesaunce
 And oon of hem / haue I in remembraunce
 Which I shal seyn / with good wyl as I kan
 ¶ But sires / by cause I am a burel man 716
 At my bigynnyng^t first I yow biseche
 Haue me excused / of my rude speche
 I lerned neuere / Rethorik^t certeyn
 Thyng *pat* I speke / It moot be bare and pleyn 720
 I sleepe neuere / in the Mount of Parnaso [leaf 154]
 Ne lerned / Marcus Tullius Scithero [Latin note, p. 499]
 Colours ne knowe I none / with outen drede
 But swiche colours / as growen in the mede 724
 Or ellis swiche / as men dye / or peynte
 Colours of Rethoryk^t they ben to queynte
 My Spirit^t feeleth nat of swich matere
 But if yow list^t my tale shul ye heere 728

[THE TALE.]

IN Armorik^t that called is Britayne ¶ Narrat^t
 Ther was a knyght^t *pat* louede & dide his payne
 To serue a lady / in his beste wise
 And many a labour / many a gret emprise 732

He for his lady wroghte / er she were wonne
 ffor she was / oon the faireste vnder Sonne
 And eek ther to / come of so heigh kynrede
 That wel vnnethes / dorste this knyght for drede 736
 Telle hire his wo / his peyne / and his distresse
 But atte laste / she for his worthynesse
 And namely / for his meke obeysance
 Hath swich a pitee caught^t of his penance 740
 That priuely / she fel of his acord
 To taken hym / for hir housbonde & hir lord
 Of swich lordshipe / as men han ouer hir wyues
 And for to lede / the moore in blisse hir lyues 744
 Of his fre wyl / he swoor hire as a knyght
 That neuere in al his lyf^t he day ne nyght^t
 Ne sholde vp on hym take / no maistrye
 Agayn hir wyl / ne kothe hire Ialousye 748
 But hire obeye / and folwe hir wyl in al
 As any louere / to his lady shal
 Saue / þat the name of soueraynetee
 That wolde he haue / for shame of his degree 752
 ¶ She thonked hym / and with ful gret humblesse
 She seyde sire / sith of youre gentillesse
 Ye profre me / to haue so large a reyne
 Ne wolde neuere god / bitwix vs tweyne 756
 As in my gilt / were outhur werre / or stryf^t
 Sire I wol be / youre humble trewe wyf
 Haue heer my trouthe / til that myn herte breste
 Thus been they bothe / in quiete and in reste 760
 [ffor¹] o thyng sires / sauflly dar I seye [¹ Rats. leaf 154, back]
 [T]hat freendes / euerich oother moote obey
 If they wol longe holden compaignye
 Loue wol nat^t be constreyned by maistrye 764
 Whan maistrie comth / the god of loue anon
 Beteth his wynges / and farwel he is gon
 Loue is a thyng^t as any spirit free
 Wommen of kynde / desiren libertee 768

And nat to been constreyned / as a thral
 And so doon men / if I sooth seyn shal
 Looke / who þat moost/ is pacient in loue
 He is / at his auantage al aboue 772
 Pacience / is an heigh vertu certeyn
 ffor it venquysseth / as thise clerkes seyn
 Thynges / that rigour sholde neuere atteyne
 ffor euery word / men may nat chide or pleyne 776
 Lerneth to suffre / or ellis so moot I gon
 Ye shul it lerne / wher so ye wole or non
 ffor in this world / certeyn ther no wight is
 That he ne dooth / or seith som tyme amys 780
 Ire / siknesse / or constellacioñ
 Wyn / wo / or chaungyng of complexioñ
 Causeth ful ofte / to doon amys or speken
 On euery wrong' a man may nat be wreken 784
 After the tyme / moste be temperaunce
 To euery wight þat kan on gouernaunce
 And therefore / hath this wise worthy knyght/
 To lyue in ese / suffrañce hire bihight' 788
 And she to hym / ful wisly gan to swere
 That neuere / sholde ther be defaute in here
 ¶ Here may men seen / an humble wys acord
 Thus hath she take / hir seruant and hir lord 792
 Seruant in loue / and lord in mariage
 Thanne was he bothe / in lordshipe & seruage
 Seruage nay / but in lordshipe aboue
 Sith he hath / bothe his lady and his loue 796
 His lady certes / and his wyf also
 The which / þat lawe of loue acordeth to
 And whan he was / in this prosperitee
 Hom with his wyf' he gooth to his contree 800
 Nat' fer fro Pedmark' ther his dwellyng was [leaf 155]
 Wher as he lyueth / in blisse and in solas
 ¶ Who koude telle / but he hadde wedded be
 The ioye / the ese / and the prosperitee 804

That is / bitwix an housbonde / and his wyf
 A yeer and moore / lasted this blisful lyf
 Til þat the knyght of which I speke of thus
 That of Kairrud / was clepid Arueragus 808
 Shoope hym to goon / and dwelle a yeer or twayne
 In Engelond / that clepid was ek Britayne
 To seke in armes / worshiþe and honour
 ffor al his lust he sette in swich labour 812
 And dwelled ther two yeer / the book seith thus
 ¶ Now wol I stynte / of this Arueragus
 And speke I wole / of Dorigene his wyf
 That loueth hir housbonde / as hir hertes lyf 816
 ffor his absence / wepeth she and siketh
 As doon thise noble wyues / whan hem liketh
 She moorneth / waketh / wailleth / fasteth / pleyneþ
 Desir of his presence / hir so destreyneth 820
 That al this wide world / she set at noght
 Hir freendes whiche þat knowe / hir heuy thoght
 Conforten hire / in al that euer they may
 They prechen hire / they telle hire nyght and day 824
 That causelees / she sleeth hir self allas
 And euery confort possible in this cas
 They doon to hire / with al hir bisynesse
 Al for to make hire / leue hir heuynesse 828
 ¶ By proces / as ye knowen euerichoon
 Men may so longe / grauen in a stoon
 Til som figure / ther Inne emprinted be
 So longe / han they confortd hire / til she 832
 Receyued hath / by hope and by resoñ
 The empringtynge of hir consolaciō
 Thurgh which / hir grete sorwe gan aswage
 She may nat alwey / duren in swich rage 836
 ¶ And eek Arueragus / in al this care
 Hath sent hire lettres hom / of his welfare
 And that he wole / come hastily agayn
 Or ellis hadde this sorwe / hir herte slayn 840

[Hire¹] freendes sawe hir sorwe gan to slake [¹ Rats. If 155, bk]
 [An]d preyde hire on knees / for goddes sake
 To come / and romen hire in compaignye
 Away to dryue / hir derke fantasye 844
 And finally / she graunted that requeste
 ffor wel she saw / þat it was for the beste
 ¶ Now stood hir Castel / faste by the See
 And often / with hir freendes walketh she 848
 Hir to disporte / vp on the bank an heigh
 Wher as she / many a Shipe and Barge seigh
 Seillynge hir cours / wher as hem liste go
 But thanne was that a parcel of hir wo 852
 ffor of hir self/ ful ofte allas seith she
 Is ther no shipe / of so manye as I se
 Wol bryngen hom my lord / thanne were myn herte
 Al warissed / of hise bittre peynes smerte 856
 ¶ Another tyme / there wolde she sitte and thynke
 And caste hir eyen / downward fro the Brynke
 But whan she seigh / the grisly Rokkes blake
 ffor verray fere / so wolde hir herte quake 860
 That on hir feet she myghte hir noght sustene
 Thanne wolde she / sitte adoun vp on the grene
 And pitously / in to the See biholde
 And seyn right thus / with sorweful sikes colde 864
 ¶ Eterne god / that thurgh thy purueiance
 Ledest the world / by certeyn gouernance
 In ydel as men seyn / ye no thyng make
 But lord / thise grisly / feendly Rokkes blake 868
 That semen rather / a foul confusioñ
 Of werk / than any fair creacioñ
 Of swich a partit^t wys god and a stable
 Why han ye wrought this werk vnresonable 872
 ffor by this werk South / North / ne west ne Est
 Ther nys yfostred / man / ne bryd / ne beest
 It doth no good to my wit but anoyeth
 Se ye nat lord / how mankynde it destroyeth 876

An hundred thousand bodies / of mankynde
 Han Rokkes slayn / al be they nat in mynd
 Which mankynde / is so fair part of thy werk
 That thow it madest lyk to thyn owen merk 880
 Thanne semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee [leaf 136]
 Toward mankynde / but how thanne may it be
 That ye swiche menes make / it to destroyen
 Whiche menes do no good / but euere anoyen 884
 I woot wel / clerkes wol seyn as hem leste
 By argumentz / that al is for the beste
 Thogh I ne kan / the causes nat yknowe
 But thilke god / þat made wynd to blowe 888
 As kepe my lord / this my conclusiō
 To clerkes / lete I al disputisiō
 But wolde god / þat alle thise Rokkes blake
 Were sonken in to helle / for his sake 892
 Thise Rokkes sleen myn herte / for the feere
 Thus wolde she seyn / with many a pitous teere
 ¶ Hir freendes sawe / that it was no disport
 To romen by the See / but discomfort 896
 And shopen / for to pleyen / som wher ellys
 They leden hire / by Ryuers and by welllys
 And eek in othere places delitables
 They dauncen / and they pleyen at Ches & tables 900
 ¶ So on a day / right in the morwe tyde
 Vn to a gardyn / that was ther bisyde
 In which / that they hadde maad hir ordinance
 Of vitaille / and of oother purueiance 904
 They goon and pleye hem / al the longe day
 And this was / on the sixte morwe of May
 Which may hadde peynted / with his softe shoures
 This gardyn / ful of leues / and of floures 908
 And craft of mannes hond / so curiously
 Arrayed hadde / this gardyn trewely
 That neuere was ther gardyn / of swich prys
 But if it were / the verray Paradys 912

The odour of floures / and the fresshe sight
 Wolde han maked / any herte lighte
 That euere was born / but if to greet siknesse
 Or to greet sorwe / helde it in destresse 916
 So ful it was / of beautee with plesaunce
 At after dyner / gonne they to daunce
 And synge also / saue Dorigen allone
 Which made alwey / hir compleynt and hir mone 920
 [1ffo]r she ne saugh hym / on the daunce go ^[1 Rats. lf 156, bk]
 That was hir housbonde / and hir loue also
 But nathelees / she moste a tyme abyde
 And with good hope / lete hir sorwe slyde 924
 ¶ Vp on this daunce / amonges othere men
 Daunced a Squier / bifore Dorigen
 That fressher was / and Iolier of array
 As to my doom / than is the Monthé of May 928
 He syngeth / daunceth / passyng any man
 That is / or was / sith þat the world bigan
 Ther with he was / if men sholde hym discryue
 Oon of the beste farynge man / on lyue 932
 Yong^r strong^r right *vertuous* / and riche and wys
 And wel biloued / and holden in gret prys
 And shortly / if the sothe I tellen shal
 Vnwityng^r of this Dorigen at al 936
 This lusty Squier / seruant to Venus
 Which / that yclepid was Aurelius
 Hadde loued hire / best of any creature
 Two yeer and moore / as was his auenture 940
 But neuere dorste he tellen hire / his greuance
 With outen coppe / he drank al his penance
 He was despeyred / no thyng dorste he seye
 Saue in his songes / som what wolde he wreye 944
 His wo / as in a general compleynyng^r
 He seyde he louede / and was biloued no thyng^r
 Of which matere / made he many layes
 Songes / compleyntes / roundels / vyrelayes 948

How þat he dorste nat^t his sorwe telle
 But langwissheth / as a fuyre dooth in helle
 And dye he moste he seyde / as dide Ekko
 ffor Narcisus / that dorste nat telle hir wo 952
 In oother manere / than ye heere me seye
 Ne dorste he nat to hire / his wo biwreyc
 Saue that parauenture / som tyme at daunces
 Ther yong folk / kepen hir obseruaunces 956
 It may wel be / he looked on hir face
 In swich a wise / as man þat asketh grace
 But no thyng wiste she / of his entente
 Nathelees it happed / er they thennes wente 960
 ¶ By cause / that he was / hir neghebour [leaf 157]
 And was a man / of worshiþe and honour
 And hadde yknowen hym / of tyme yoore
 They fille in speche / and forth moore and moore 964
 Vn to this purpos / drough Aurelius
 And whan he saugh his tyme / he seyde thus
 ¶ Madame quod he / by god that this world made
 So þat I wiste / it myghte youre herte glade 968
 I wolde that day / þat youre Arueragus
 Wente ouer the See / that I Aurelius
 Hadde went / ther neuere I sholde haue come agayn
 ffor wel I woot my seruyce is in vayn 972
 My gerdon is / but brestyng of myn herte
 Madame reweth / vp on my peynes smerte
 ffor with a word / ye may me sle or saue
 Here at youre feet god wolde þat I were graue 976
 I ne haue as now / no leyser moore to seye
 Haue mercy swete / or ye wol do me deye
 ¶ She gan to looke / vp on Aurelius
 Is this youre wil quod she / and sey ye thus 980
 Neuere erst quod she / ne wiste I what ye mente
 But now Aurelie / I knowe youre entente
 By thilke god / that yaf me soule and lyf
 Ne shal I neuere / been vntrewe a wyf 984

In word ne werk' as fer as I haue wyt'
 I wol been hys / to whom þat I am knyht'
 Taak this for fynal / as of me
 But after that' in pleye thus seyde she 988
 ¶ Aurelie quod she / by heighe god aboue
 Yet wolde I graunte yow / to been youre loue
 Syn I yow se / so pitously complayne
 Looke what day / þat endelong Britayne 992
 Ye remoeue alle the Rokkes / stoon by stoon
 That they ne lette / shipe ne Boot' to goon
 I seye / whan ye han maad / the coost so clene
 Of Rokkes / that ther nys no stoon ysene 996
 Thanne wol I loue yow / best of any man
 Haue heer my trouthe / in al that enere I kan
 ¶ Is ther noon oother grace / in yow quod he
 ¶ No by that lord quod she / that maked me 1000
 [ffor¹] wel I woot' that it shal neuere bityde [¹Rats. 1f 157, bk]
 [L]at swiche folies / out of youre herte slyde
 What deyntee / sholde a man han his lyf
 ffor to loue / another mannes wyf 1004
 That hath hir body / whan so that hym liketh
 ¶ Aurelius / ful ofte soore siketh
 Wo was Aurelie / whan þat he this herle
 And with a sorweful herte / he thus answerde 1008
 ¶ Madame quod he / this were an impossible
 Thanne moot I dye / of sodeyn deth horrible
 And with that word / he turned hym anon
 Tho coome / hir othere freendes many oon 1012
 And in the Aleyes / romeden vp and doun
 And no thyng wiste / of this conclusioun
 But sodeynly / bigonne reuel newe
 Til that the brighte sonne / loste his hewe 1016
 ffor thorisonte / hath reft the Sonne his light'
 This is as muche to seye / as it was nyght'
 And hom they goon / in ioye and in solas
 Saue oonly / wrecched Aurelius allas 1020

He to his hous is goon / with sorweful herte
 He seeth / he may nat from his deeth asterte
 Hym semed / that he felte his herte colde
 Vp to the heuene / hise hondes he gan holde 1024
 And on his knowes bare / he sette hym doun
 And in his rauynge / seyde his orisoun
 ffor verray wo / out of his wit he breyde
 He nyste what he spak but thus he seyde 1028
 With pitous herte / his pleynt hath he bigonne
 Vn to the goddes / and first vn to the sonne
 ¶ He seyde Appollo / god and gouernour
 Of euery plaunte / herbe / tree / and flour 1032
 That yeuest after thy declynaciō
 To ech of hem / his tyme and his sesō
 As thyn herberwe / chaungeth / lowe or heighe
 Lord Phebus / cast thy merciable eighe 1036
 On wrecche Aurelie / which þat am but lorn
 Lo lord / my lady hath my deeth ysworn
 With outen gilt but thy benygnytee
 Vp on my dedly herte / haue som pitee 1040
 ffor wel I woot lord Phebus / if yow lest/
 [leaf 158]
 Ye may me helpen / saue my lady best
 Now voucheth sauf / þat I may yow deuyse
 How þat I may been holpe / and in what wyse 1044
 ¶ Youre blisful Suster / ^{l. luna} lucyna the shene
 That of the See / is chief goddesse and queene
 Thogh Neptunus / haue deitee in the See
 Yet Empiresse / abouen hym is she 1048
 Ye knowen wel lord / that right as hir desir
 Is / to be quyked / and lighted of youre fyr
 ffor which / she folweth yow / ful bisily
 Right so the See / desireth naturelly 1052
 To folwen hire / as she þat is goddesse
 Bothe in the See / and Ryuers moore and lesse
 Wherefore lord Phebus / this is my requeste
 Do this myracle / or do myn herte breste 1056

That now next/ at this opposicioñ
 Which in the signe / shal be of the Lion
 As preyeth hire / so greet a flood to brynge
 That fyue fadme at the leeste / it ouer sprynge 1060
 The hyeste Rok^t in Armoryk^t Britayne
 And lat this flood / endure yeris twayne
 Thanne certes / to my lady / may I seye
 Holdeth youre heste / the Rokkes been aweye 1064
 ¶ Lord Phebus / dooth this myracle for me
 Pray hire / she go no faster cours than ye
 I seye this / prayeth youre Suster/ þat she go
 No faster cours than ye / thise yeris two 1068
 Thanne shal she been euene / at the fulle alway
 And spryng flood lasten / bothe nyght and day
 And but she vouche sauþ/ in swich manere
 To graunte me / my souerayn lady deerè 1072
 Pray hire / to synken euery Rok/ adown
 In to / hir owene dirke Regioun
 Vnder the ground / ther Pluto dwelleth Inne
 Or neuere mo / shal I my lady wyne 1076
 Thy temple in Delphos / wol I barfoot seke
 Lord Phebus / Se the teerys on my cheke
 And of my peyne / haue som compassioun
 And *with* that word / in swowne he fil adoun 1080
 [And¹] longe tyme / he lay forth in a traunce [¹Rats. If 158, bk]
 [¹H]is brother / which that knew of his penaunce
 Vp caughte hym / and to bedde he hath hym broght^t
 Despeired / in this torment^t and this thoght 1084
 Lete I / this woful creature lye
 Chese he for me / wher he wol lyue or dye
 ¶ Arueragus / with heele / and greet honour
 As he þat was / of Chiualrie the flour 1088
 Is comen hom / and othere worthy men
 O blisful artow now / thow dorigen
 That^t hast thy lusty housbonde / in thyn armes
 The fresshe knyght^t the worthy man of armes 1092

That loueth thee / as his owene hertes lyf
 No thyng list hym / to been ymagynatyf
 If any wight hadde spoke / whil he was oute
 To hire of loue / he ne hadde of it no doute 1096
 He noght entendeth / to no swich matere
 But daunceth / Iusteth / maketh hir good cheere
 And thus in ioye and blisse / I lete hem dwelle
 And of the Syke Aurelius / wol I telle 1100
 ¶ In langour / and in torment furyus
 Two yeer and moore / lay wrecche Aurelius
 Er any foot^t he myghte on erthe gen
 Ne confort in this tyme / hadde he non 1104
 Saue of his brother / which þat was a Clerk
 He knew of al this wo / and al this werk
 ffor / to noon oother creature certeyn
 Of this matere / he dorste no word seyn 1108
 Vnder his brist^t he baar it moore secrete
 Than euere dide Panfilus / for Galathee
 His brist was hool / with oute for to sene
 But in his herte / ay was the arwe kene 1112
 And wel ye knowe / þat of a Sursanure
 In Surgerye / is perilous the cure
 But men myghte touche the arwe / or come therby
 His brother / weepe and wayled pryuely 1116
 Til at the laste / hym fil in remembrance
 That whils he was / in Orlens in ffrance
 As yonge clerkes / that been lykerous
 To reden Artes / that been curious 1120
 Seken / in euery halke / and euery herne [p. af 159]
 Particuler Sciences / for to lerne
 He hym remembred / þat vp on a day
 At Orlens in Studie / a book he say 1124
 Of Magyk naturel / which his felawe
 That was that tyme / a Bachiler of lawe
 Al were he ther / to lerne another craft
 Hadde priuely / vp on his desk^t ylaft^t 1128

Which book spak muchel / of the operaciõs
 Touchynge / the .xxviiij. mansiõs
 That longen to the Moone / and swich folye
 As in oure dayes / is nat worth a flye 1132
 ffor holy chirches feith / in oure bileue
 Ne suffreth / noon illusiõ vs to greue
 And whan this book^t was in his remembrance
 Anon for ioye / his herte gan to dañce 1136
 And to hym self / he seyde pryuely
 My brother / shal be warissshed hastily
 ffor I am siker / þat ther be sciences
 By whiche / men make diuerse apparences 1140
 Swiche / as thise subtile / Tregettours pleye
 ffor ofte at festes / haue I wel herd seye
 That Tregettours / with Inne an halle large
 Haue maad come In / a water / and a barge 1144
 And in the halle / rowen vp and down
 Som tyme hath semed / come a grym leoun
 And som tyme floures sprynge / as in a mede
 Som tyme a vyne / and grapes white and rede 1148
 Som tyme a Castel / al of lym and Stoon
 And whan hem lyked / voyded it anoon
 Thus semed it^t to euery mannes sighte
 ¶ Now thanne conclude I thus / þat if I myghte 1152
 At Orlens / som old felawe yfynde
 That hadde / this Moones mansions in mynde
 Or oother Magyk^t naturel aboute
 He sholde wel / make my brother han his loue 1156
 ffor with an apparence / a clerk may make
 To mannes sighte / þat alle the Rokkes blake
 Of Britaigne / were yvoyded euerichon
 And Shippes / by the brynke / comen and gon 1160
 [And¹] in swich forme / enduren a day or two
 Thanne were my brother / warissshed of his wo
 Thanne moste she nedes / holden hir biheste
 Or ellis / he shal shame hire / at the leeste 1164

[¹ *Rots.*
leaf 159, back]

¶ What sholde I make / a lenger tale of this
 Vn to his brotheres bed / he comen is
 And swich confort^t he yaf hym for to gon
 To Orliens / that he vp stirte anon 1168
 And on his wey forthward / thanne he is fare
 In hope / for to been lissed of his care
 ¶ Whan they were come / almoost to that Citee
 But if it were / a two furlong or thre 1172
 A yong clerk^t / romynge by hym self they mette
 Which þat in latyn / thriftily hem grette
 And after that / he seyde a wonder thyng^t
 I knowe quod he / the cause of youre comyng^t 1176
 And er they ferther / any foote wente
 He tolde hem / al that was in hir entente
 ¶ This Britoñ clerk^t hym asked of felawes
 The whiche þat he hadde knowe / in olde dawes 1180
 And he answerde hym / þat they dede were
 ffor which / he weepe ful ofte many a teere
 ¶ Doun of his hors / Aurelius lighte anon
 And with this Magicien / forth he is gon 1184
 Hom to his hous / and maden hem wel atese
 Hem lakked no vitaille / þat myghte hem plesse
 So wel arrayed hous / as ther was oon
 Aurelius in his lyf / saw neuere noon 1188
 ¶ He shewed hym / er he wente to soper
 fforestes / Parkes / ful of wilde deer
 Ther saw he hertes / with hir hornes hye
 The gretteste / þat euere were seyn with eye 1192
 He say of hem / an hundred slayn with houndes
 And somme with arwes blede / of bittre woundes
 ¶ He saw / whan voyded were thise wilde deer
 Thise ffawconers / vp on a fair Ryuer 1196
 That with hir hawkes / han the heron slayn
 ¶ Tho saugh he knyghtes / Iustyng in a playn
 And after this / he dide hym this plesaunce
 That he hym shewed / his lady on a daunce 1200

On which hym self / he daunced as hym thoughte [leaf 160]
 And whan this maister / þat this magyk wroughte
 Saugh it was tyme / he clapte his handes two
 And farwel / al our reuel was ago 1204
 And yet remoeued they neuere / out of the hous
 Whil they sawe / al this sighte merueillous
 But in his studie / ther as his bookes be
 They sitten stille / and no wight but they thre 1208
 ¶ To hym this maister / called his Squyer
 And seide hym thus / is redy oure soper
 Almoost an houre it is / I vndertake
 Sith I yow bad / oure soper for to make 1212
 Whan that thise worthy men / wenten with me
 In to my studie / ther as my bookes be
 ¶ Sire quod this Squyer / whan it liketh yow
 It is al redy / thogh ye wol right now 1216
 Go we thanne soupe quod he / as for the beste
 This amorous folk som tyme mote han hir reste
 ¶ At after soper / fille they in tretee
 What somme sholde / this Maistres gerdoñ be 1220
 To remoeuen / alle the Rokkes of Britayne
 And eek from Gerounde / to the mouth of Sayne
 He made it straunge / and swoor so god hym saue
 Lasse than a thousand pound / he wolde nat haue 1224
 Ne gladly for that somme / he wolde nat gon
 ¶ Aurelius / with blisful herte anon
 Answerde thus / fy on a thousand pound
 This wyde world / which þat men seye is round 1228
 I wolde it yeue / if I were lord of it
 This bargayn is ful dryue / for we ben knyht
 Ye shal be payed trewely / by my trouthe
 But looketh now / for no necligence or slouthe 1232
 Ye tarie vs heer / no lenger than tomorwe
 ¶ Nay quod this clerk haue heer my feith to borwe
 ¶ To bedde is goon Aurelius / whan hym leste
 And wel neigh al that nyght / he hadde his reste 1236

What for his labour / and his hope of blisse
 His woful herte / of penaunce hadde a lisse
 ¶ Vp on the morwe / whan þat it was day
 To Britayne / tooke they the righte way 1240
 [¹Aur]elius / and this Magicien bisyde [¹ Rats. 1e. f 160, back]
 And been descended / ther they wolde abyde
 And this was / as thise bookes me remembre
 The colde / frosty seson of decembre 1244
 ¶ Phebus wax old / and hewed lyk latoñ
 That in his hote declynacioñ
 Shoon as the burned gold / with stremys brighte
 But now in Capricorn / adoun he lighte 1248
 Where as he shoon ful pale / I dar wel seyn
 The bittre frostes / with the sleet and reyn
 Destroyed hath the grene / in euery yerd
 Ianus sit by the fyr / with double berd ¶ Ianus biceps.
 And drynketh / of his bugle horn the wyn
 Biforn hym stant brawen / of the tusked swyn
 And Nowel / crieth euery lusty man
 ¶ Aurelius / al þat euere he kan 1256
 Dooth to this maister / cheere & reuerence
 And preyeth hym / to doon his diligence
 To bryngen hym / out of his peynes smerte
 Or with a swerd / þat he wolde slytte his herte 1260
 ¶ This subtil clerk swich routhe hadde of this man
 That nyght and day / he spedde hym that he kan
 To wayten a tyme / of his conclusioñ
 This is to seyn / to make illusion 1264
 By swich an apparence / or Iogelrye
 I ne kan / no termes of Astrologye
 That she and euery wight sholde wene and seye
 That of Britayne / the Rokkes were aweye 1268
 Or ellis / were sonken vnder grounde
 So at the laste / he hath his tyme yfounded
 To maken his Iapes / and his wrecchednesse
 Of swich / a superstitious cursednesse 1272

His tables tolletanes / forth he broght
 fful wel corrected / ne ther lakked noght
 Neither his collect^t ne his expans yeris
 Ne hise rootes / ne hise othere geris 1276
 As been his centris / and hise argumentz
 And hise proporcionels conuenientz
 ffor hise equacions / in euery thyng
 And by his .8. speere / in his wirkyng^t 1280
 He knew ful wel / how fer Alnath was shoue [leaf 131]
 ffro the heed / of thilke fixe Aries aboue
 That in the .9. speere / considered is
 fful subtilly/ he kalkuled al this 1284
 ¶ Whan he hadde founde / his firste mansiō
 He knew the remenaunt^t by proporcioñ
 And knew the arisyng^t of his Moone wel
 And in whos face / and terme / and euery del 1288
 And knew ful wel / the Moones mansiō
 Acordaunt / to his operacioñ
 And knew also / hise othere obseruaunces
 ffor swiche illusions / and swiche meschañces 1292
 As hethen folk vseden / in thilke dayes
 ffor which no lenger / maked he delays
 But thurgh his magyk^t for a wyke or tweye
 It semed/ that alle the Rokkes were aweye 1296
 ¶ Aurelius / which þat yet despeired is
 Wher he shal han his loue / or fare amys
 Awaiteth nyght and day / on this myracle
 And whan he knew / that ther was noon obstacle 1300
 That voyded were / thise Rokkes euerichon
 Doun to his maistres feet^t he fil anon
 And seyde / I woful wrecche Aurelius
 Thonke yow lord / and lady myn Venus 1304
 That me han holpen / fro my cares colde
 And to the temple / his wey forth hath he holde
 Wher as he knew / he sholde his lady se
 And whan he saw his tyme / anon right he 1308

With dredful herte / and with ful humble cheere
 Salued hath / his souerayn lady deere
 ¶ My righte lady / quod this woful man
 Whom I moost drede / and loue as I best kan 1312
 And lothest were / of al this world displese
 Nere it^t þat I for yow haue swich disese
 That I moste dyen heer / at youre foot anon
 Noght wolde I telle yow / how me is wo bigon 1316
 But *certes* / outhere moste I dye / or pleyne
 Ye sleen me giltles / for verray peyne
 But of my deeth / thogh þat ye haue no routhe
 Auyseth yow / er that ye breke your trouthe 1320
 [Repen]teth yow / for thilke god aboute [*Rats.* leaf 161, back]
 Er ye me sleen / by cause that I yow loue /
 ffor madame / wel ye woot^t what ye han hight^t
 Nat þat I chalange / any thyng of right^t 1324
 Of yow my souereyn lady / but youre grace
 But in a gardyn yond / at swich a place
 Ye woot right wel / what ye bihighten me
 And in myn hand / your trouthe pligheten ye 1328
 To loue me best^t god woot ye seyden so
 Al be / þat I vnworthy am ther to
 Madame I speke it / for the honour of yow
 Moore than to saue / myn hertes lyf right now 1332
 I haue do so / as ye comaunded me
 And if ye vouche sau^t / ye may go se
 Dooth as yow list^t haue youre biheste in mynde
 ffor quy^t / or deed / right ther ye shal me fynde 1336
 In yow lyth al / to do me lyue or deye
 But wel I woot^t the Rokkes been aweye
 ¶ He taketh his leue / and she astoned stood
 In al hir face / nas a drope of blood 1340
 She wende neuere haue come / in swich a trappe
 Allas quod she / þat euere this sholde happe
 ffor wende I neuere / by possibilitee
 That swich a Monstre / or merueille myghte be 1344

It is agayns / the proces of nature
 And hom she gooth / a sorweful creature
 ffor verray feere / vnnethe may she go
 She wepeth / wayleth / al a day or two 1348
 And swowneth / that it routhe was to se
 But why it was / to no wight tolde she
 ffor out of towne / was goon Arueragus
 But to hir self/ she spak and seyde thus 1352
 With face pale / and with ful sorweful cheere
 In hir compleinte / as ye shal after heere
 ¶ Allas quod she / on thee ffortune I pleyne
 That vnwar / wrapped hast me in thy cheyne 1356
 ffor which tescape / woot I no socour
 Saue oonly / deeth / or deshonour
 Oon of thise two / bihoueth me to chese
 But nathelees / yet haue I leuere to lese 1360
 My lyf / than of my body to haue a shame/ [leaf 162]
 Or knowen my seluen fals / or lese my name
 And with my deeth / I may be quyt ywis
 Hath ther nat many a noble wyf er this 1364
 And many a mayde / yslayn hir self allas
 Rather / than with hir body doon trespas
 ¶ Yis certes / lo thise stories beren witnesse
 Whan .xxx. tirauntz / ful of cursednesse 1368
 Hadde slayn Phidon / in Atthenes atte feste [Latin note, p. 499]
 They comaunded / his doghtren for tareste
 And bryngen hem / biforn hem in despit
 Al naked / to fulfille hir foul delit 1372
 And in hir fadres blood / they made hem daunce
 Vp on the pauement god yeue hem meschaunce
 ffor which / thise woful maydens / ful of drede
 Rather / than they wolde lese hir maydenhede 1376
 They pryuely / been stirt in to a welle
 And dreynte hem seluen / as the bokes telle
 ¶ They of Mecene / leete enquere and seke
 Of Lacedomye / fifty maydens eke 1380

On whiche / they wolden doon hir lecherye
 But was ther noon / of al that compaignye
 That she nas slayn / and with a good entente
 Chees rather for to dye / than assente 1384
 To been oppressed / of hir maydenhede
 Why sholde I thanne / to dye been in drede
 ¶ Loo eek / the tiraunt Aristoclidez
 That loued a mayden / highte Stymphalides 1388
 Whan þat hir fader / slayn was on a nyght
 Vn to Dianes temple / gooth she right
 And hente the ymage / in hir handes two
 ffro which ymage / wolde she neuere go 1392
 No wight ne myghte / hir handes of it arace
 Til she was slayn / right in the selue place
 Now sith þat maydens / hadden swich despit [Latin note, p. 499]
 To been defouled / with mannes foul delit 1396
 Wel oghte a wyf / rather hir seluen sle
 Than be defouled / as it thynketh me
 ¶ What shal I seyn / of Hasdrubales wyf
 That at Cartage / birafte hir self hir lyf 1400
 [ffor¹] whan she saw / that Romayns wan the town [¹Rats.
lf 162, bk]
 [1S]he took hir children alle / and skipte adown
 In to the fyr / and chees rather to dye
 Than any Romayn / dide hire vileynye 1404
 ¶ Hath nat Lucesse / yslayn hir self allas
 At Rome / whan she oppressed was
 Of Tarquyn / for hir thoughte it was a shame
 To lyuen / whan she hadde lost hir name 1408
 ¶ The .vij. maydens / of Milesie also
 Han slayn hem self / for verray drede and wo
 Rather than folk / of Gawle / hem sholde oppresse
 Mo than a thousand stories / as I gesse 1412
 Koude I now telle / as touchyng this matere
 ¶ Whan habradace was slayn / his wyf so deere
 Hir seluen slow / and leet hir blood to glyde
 In Habradaces woundes / depe and wyde 1416

And seyde / my body / at the leeste way
 Ther shal no wight^t defoulen if I may
 ¶ What sholde I mo ensamples / her of sayn
 Sith that so manye / han hem seluen slayn 1420
 Wel rather / than they wolde defouled be
 I wol conclude / that it is bet for me
 To sleen my self^t than ben defouled thus
 I wol be trewe / vn to Arueragus 1424
 Or rather sle my self^t in som manere
 As dide / democienis doghter deere
 By cause / *pat* she wolde nat defouled be
 ¶ O Cedasus / it is ful gret pitee 1428
 To reden / how thy doghtren deyde allas
 That slowe hem self^t for swich maner cas
 ¶ As greet a pitee was it^t or wel moore
 The Theban mayden / that for Nychanore 1432
 Hir seluen slow / right for swich manere wo
 ¶ Another Theban mayden / dide right so
 ffor oon of Macedonye / hadde hire oppressed
 She *wit*h hir owene deeth / hir maydenhed redressed 1436
 ¶ What shal I seyn / of Nycceratis wyf
 That for swich eas / birafte hir self hir lyf
 ¶ How trewe eek / was to Alcebiades
 His loue / that rather for to dyen chees 1440
 Than for to suffre / his body vnburied be [leaf 163]
 ¶ Lo which a wyf / was Alceste quod she
 ¶ What Omer / of goode Penolopee
 Al Grece / knoweth of hir chastitee 1444
 ¶ *Pardee* of Laodomya / is writen thus
 That whan at Troye / was slayn Prothesclaus
 No lenger wolde she lyue / after his day
 ¶ The same / of noble Porcia telle I may 1448
 With oute Brutus / koude she nat lyue
 To whom she hadde / al hool hir herte yeue
 ¶ The *parfit* wifhod / of Arthemesye
 Honoured is / thurgh al the Barbarye 1452

¶ O Teuta queene / thy wifly chastitee

To alle wyues / may a Mirour bee

[. *[Not in Reg. 18 C ii, lf 154, bk; or Sloane 1685, lf 155, bk; or Harl. 1758, lf 135; or Harl. 7335, lf 151, bk; or Harl. 7333, lf 85 bk, col. 2; or Sloane 1686, lf 205; or Reg. 17 D xv, lf 188, bk (leaf out of Harl. 1239). Not in any Cambr. or Bodl. MS, or Christ-Church.]*

¶ Thus pleyned Dorigene / a day or tweye

Purposynge euere þat she wolde deye

¶ But natheles / vp on the thridde nyght

Hom cam Arueragus / this worthy knyght

And asked hire / why þat she weepe so soore 1461

And she gan wepen / euer lenger the moore

¶ Allas quod she / þat euere was I born

Thus haue I seyde quod she / thus haue I sworn 1464

And tolde hym al / as ye han herd bifore

It nedeth nat' reherce it yow namoore

¶ This housbond with glad cheere / in frendly wise

Answerde and seyde / as I shal yow deuyse 1468

¶ Is ther oght ellis dorigen / but this

¶ Nay nay quod she / god help me so as wys

This is to mucche / and it were goddes wille

¶ Ye wyf quod he / lat slepen that is stille 1472

It may be wel perauenture / yet to day

Ye shul youre trouthe holden / by my fay

ffor god so wisly / haue mercy vp on me

I hadde wel leuere / ystiked for to be 1476

ffor verray loue / which þat I to yow haue

But if ye sholde / youre trouthe kepe and saue

Trouthe is the hyeste thyng' þat man may kepe

But with that word / he brast anon to wepe 1480

And seyde I yow forbode / vp peyne of deeth

That neuere whil thee lasteth / lyf ne breeth

[To no¹] wight tel thow / of this auenture [¹ Rats. lf 163, bk]

[As¹] I may best / I wol my wo endure 1484

Ne make / no contenance of heuynesse

That folk of yow / may demen harm or gesse

¶ And forth he clepyd / a Squyer and a mayde

Goth forth anon with Dorigen / he sayde 1488

And bryngeth hire / to swich a place anon
 They toke hir leue / and on hir wey they gon
 But they ne wiste / why they thider wente
 He nolde to no wight^t tellen his entente 1492

[. [Not in Reg. 18 C ii,
 leaf 155; or Sloane
 1685, lf 156; or Harl.
 7335, lf 152; or Harl.
 1758, leaf 135, bk; or
 Harl. 7333, lf 86, col.
 1; or Sloane 1686, lf
 205, bk; or Reg. 17
 D xiv, lf 189; leaf out
 of Harl. 1239.
 l. 1493-8 known only
 in the Ellesmere MS.]
 no gap in the MS.]

¶ This Squyer / which þat highte Aurelius
 On Dorigen / þat was so amorus 1500

Of auenture / happed hir to meete
 Amydde the town / right in the quykkest strete
 As she was boun / to goon the wey forth right^t
 Toward the gardyn / ther as she had hight^t 1504

And he was / to the gardynward also
 ffor wel he spyed / whan she wolde go
 Out of hir hous / to any maner place
 But thus they meete / of auenture or grace 1508

And he salueth hire / with glad entente
 And asked of hire / whiderward she wente
 ¶ And she answerde / half as she were mad
 Vn to the gardyn / as myn housbond bad 1512

My trouthe for to holde / allas / allas
 ¶ Aurelius / gan wondren on this cas
 And in his herte / hadde greet compassion
 Of hire / and of hir lamentaciō 1516


And of Arueragus / the worthy knyght^t
 That bad hir holden / al that she had hight^t
 So looth hym was / his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe
 And in his herte / he caughte of this greet routhe 1520

Considerynge the beste / on euery syde
 That fro his lust^t yet were hym leuere abyde
 Than doon so heigh / a cherlyssh wrecchednesse
 Agayns franchise / and alle gentillesse 1524

ffor which in fewe wordes / seyde he thus
 ¶ Madame / seyeth to youre lord Arueragus
 That sith I se / his grete gentillesse
 To yow / and eek I se wel youre distresse 1528
 That hym were leuere han shame / and that were routhe
 Than ye to me / sholde breke thus your trouthe [leaf 164]
 I haue wel leuere / euere to suffre wo
 Than I departe the loue / bitwix yow two 1532
 I yow relesse madame / in to youre hond
 Quyt euery serement and euery bond
 That ye han maad to me / as her biforn
 Sith thilke tyme / which þat ye were born 1536
 My trouthe I plichte / I shal you neuer repreue
 Of no biheeste / and here I take my leue
 As of the treweste / and the beste wyf
 That euere yet I knew / in al my lyf 1540
 But euery wyf / be war of hir biheste
 On Dorigene / remembreth at the leste
 Thus kan a Squyer / doon a gentil dede
 As wel as kan a knyght with outen drede 1544
 ¶ She thonketh hym / vp on hir knees al bare
 And hom vn to hir housbond / is she fare
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd me sayd
 And be ye siker / he was so wel apayd 1548
 That it were impossible / me to write
 What sholde I lenger / of this cas endite
 ¶ Arueragus / and Dorigene his wyf
 In souereyn blisse / leden forth hir lyf 1552
 Neuere eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene
 He cherisseth hire / as thogh she were a queene
 And she was to hym trewe / for euere moore
 Of thise two folk / ye gete of me namoore 1556
 ¶ Aurelius / that his cost hath al forlorn
 Curseth the tyme / that euere he was born
 Allas quod he / allas that I bihighte
 Of pured gold / a thousand pound of wighte 1560

Vn to this Philosophre / how shal I do
 I se namoore / but that I am for-do
 Myn heritage / moot I nedes selle
 And been a beggere / here may I nat dwelle 1564
 And shamen al my kynrede / in this place
 But I of hym / may gete bettre grace
 But natheles / I wol of hym assaye
 At certeyn dayes / yeer by yeer to paye 1568
 [And¹] thonke hym / of his grete curteisye [¹Rats. lf 164, bk]
 [1M]y trouthe wol I kepe / I nel nat lye
 ¶ With herte soor / he gooth vn to his cofre
 And broghte gold / vn to this Philosophre 1572
 The value / of fyue hundred pound I gesse
 And hym bisecheth / of his gentillesse
 To graunten hym dayes / of the remenant
 And seyde Maister / I dar wel make auant 1576
 I fayled neuere / of my trouthe as yit
 ffor sikerly / my dette shal be quytd
 Towardes yow / how euere þat I fare
 To goon abegged / in my kirtel bare 1580
 But wolde ye vouche sauf vp on seuretee
 Two yeer or thre / for to respiten me
 Thanne were I wel / for ellis moot I selle
 Myn heritage / ther is namoore to telle 1584
 ¶ This Philosophre / sobrelly answerde
 And seyde thus / whan he thise wordes herde
 Haue I nat holden couenant vn to thee
 ¶ Yis certes / wel and trewely quod he 1588
 ¶ Hastow nat had / thy lady as thee liketh
 ¶ No no quod he / and sorwefully he siketh
 ¶ What was the cause / tel me if thow kan
 ¶ Aurelius / his tale anon bigan 1592
 And tolde hym al / as ye han herd bfore
 It nedeth nat to yow reherce it moore
 ¶ He seyde / Arueragus / of gentillesse
 Hadde leuere dye / in sorwe and in distresse 1596

Than þat his wyf/ were of hir trouthe fals
 The sorwe of dorigen / he tolde hym als
 How looth hir was / to ben a wikked wyf
 And þat she leuere had lost^t that day hir lyf 1600
 And þat hir trouthe / she swoor thurgh Innocence
 She neuere erst^t hadde herd speke / of apparence
 That made me han of hire / so greet pitee
 And right as frely / as he sente hir me 1604
 As frely sente I hire / to hym agayn
 This al and som / ther is namoore to sayn
 ¶ This Philosophre answerde / leeue brother
 Euerich of yow / dide gentilly til oother 1608
 Thow art a Squyer / and he is a knyght^t [leaf 165]
 But god forbede / for his blisful myght^t
 But if a clerk^t koude doon a gentil dede
 As wel as any of yow / it is no drede 1612
 ¶ Sire I relese thee / thy thowsand pound
 As thow right now / were copen out of the ground
 Ne neuere er now / ne haddest knowen me
 ffor sire / I wol nat take a peny of thee 1616
 ffor al my craft^t ne noght for my trauaille
 Thow hast ypayed wel / for my vitaille
 It is ynogh / and fare wel haue good day
 And took his hors / and forth he goth his way 1620
 ¶ Lordynges / this question / than wol I aske now
 Which was the mooste free / as thynketh yow
 Now telleth me / er that ye ferther wende
 I kan namoore / my tale is at an ende 1624

¶ Here endeth the ffrankeleyns tale 

[No more text on this page of the MS.]

GROUP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

§ 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

HENGWRT MS.

[THE PROEM.]

The Nonne :

[*head-line*] [leaf 165, back]

(1)

T He Ministre / and the norice vn to vices	1
Which that men clepeth in englissh ydelnesse	
That porter at the gate is / of delices	
To eschuen / and by hir contrarie hire oppresse	4
That is to seyn / by leueful bisynesse	
Wel oghte we / to doon al oure entente	
Lest that the feend / thurgh ydelnesse vs hente	7

(2)

¶ ffor he / that with his thousand cordes slye	8
Continuelly / vs wayteth to bielappe	
Whan he may man / in ydelnesse espye	
He kan so lightly / cacche hym in his trappe	11
Til that a man / be hent right by the lappe	
He nys nat war / the feend hath hym in honde	
Wel oghte vs werche / and ydelnesse withstonde	14

(3)

¶ And thogh men dradden / neuere for to dye	15
Yet seen men wel / by reson doutelees	
That ydelnesse / is roten slogardye	
Of which ther neuere comth / no good nencrees	18
And seen that Slouthe / hir holdeth in a lees	
Only for to slepe / and ete and drynken	
And to deuouren / al that othere swynken	21

(4)

¶ And for to putte vs / from swich ydelnesse	22
That cause is / of so greet confusiō	
I haue here doon / my feithful bisynesse	
After the legende / in translaciō	25
Right of thy glorious lyf / and passiō	
Thow with thy gerland / wroght of rose & lillie	
Thee mene I / mayde and martir Seinte Cecilie	28

(5)

A nd thow / that flour of virgines art alle	Inuocacio ad marian.
Of whom that Bernard / list so wel to write	
To thee / at my bigynnyng I first calle	
Thow confort of vs wrecches / do mendite	32
Thy maydens deeth / that wan thurgh hir merite	
The eternal lyf / and of the feend victorie	
As man may after / reden in hir Storie	35

(6)

¶ Thow mayde and moder / doghter of thy sone	[leaf 166]
Thow welle of mercy / synful soules cure	
In whom that god / for bountee chees to wone	
Thow humble and heigh / ouer euery creature	39
Thow nobledest so ferforth oure nature	
That no desdaign / the makere hadde of kynde	
His sone / in blood & flessch / to clothe & wynde	42

(7)

¶ With Inne the Cloistre blisful / of thy sydis	43
Took mannes shape / the eternal loue and pees	
That of the tryne compas / lord and gyde is	
Whom erthe and see / and heuene out of relees	46
Ay heryen / and thow virgyne wemmeles	
Bar of thy body / and dweltest mayde pure	
The creatour / of euery creature	49

(8)

Assembled is in thee Magnificence	50
With mercy / goodnesse / and swich pitee	
That thow that art the sonne of excellence	
Nat oonly / helpst hem þat prayen thee	53
But ofte tyme / of thy benygnytee	
fful frely / er that men / thyn helpe biseche	
Thow goost biforn / and art hir lyues leche	56

(9)

Now help thow meke / and blisful faire mayde	57
Me flemed wrecche / in this desert of galle	
Thynk on the womman Cananee / that sayde	
That whelpes eten / somme of the crommes alle	60
That from hir lordes table / been yfalle	
And thogh that I / vnworthy sone of Eue	
Be synful / yet accepte my bileue	63

(10)

¶ And for that feith is deed / with outen werkis	64
So for to werken / yif me wit and space	
That I be quyit / from thennes / that moost derk is	
O thow / that art so fair / and ful of grace	67
Be myn Aduocate / in that heighe place	
Ther as with outen ende / is songe Osanne	
Thow cristes moder / doghter deere of Anne	70

(11)

[¹ An]d of thy light my soule in prison lighte [¹ <i>Rats.</i> W 166, bk]	
That troubled is / by the contagioñ	
Of my body / and also by the wighte	
Of erthely lust and fals affeccioñ	74
O. hauene / o. refut o. sauacioñ	
Of hem / that been in sorwe and in distresse	
Now help / for to my werk I wol me dresse	77

(12)

¶ Yet praye ich yow / þat reden that I write	78
fforyeue me / that I do no diligence	
This ilke storie / subtilly tendite	
ffor bothe haue I / the wordes and sentence	81
Of hym / that at the Seintes reuerence	
The storie wroot ^t and folwen hir legende	
And pray yow / that ye wol my werk amende	84

(13) [*THE TALE.*]

F irst wolde I yow / the name of Seinte Cecilie	<i>Interpretacio nominis Cecilie. quam ponit fra- ter Iacobus^{us} la- nuensis in le- genda aurea.</i>
Expowne / as men may in hir storie se	
It is to seyn on englissh / heuenes lilie	
ffor pure chastnesse / of virginitee	88
Or for she whitnesse hadde of honestee	
And grene of conscience / and of good fame	
The swote sauour lilie / was hir name	91

(14)

¶ Or Cecile is to seyn / the wey to blynde	92
ffor she ensample was / by good techynge	
Or ellis Cecile / as I writen fynde	
Is ioyned / by a manere conioignyng	95
Of heuene / and lia / and here in figuryng	
The heuene is set ^t for thoght of holynesse	
And lia / for hir lastyng bisynesse	98

(15)

¶ Cecile may eek be seyde in this manere	99
Wantyng of blyndnesse / for hir grete light ^t	
Of Sapience / and for hir thewes clere	
Or ellis lo / this maydenes name bright ^t	102
Of heuene and leos comth / for which by right ^t	
Men myghte hire wel / the heuene of peple calle	
Ensample of goode / and wise werkes alle	105

(16)

¶ For leos / peple in englissh is to seye [leaf 167]
 And right as men may / in the heuene see
 The sonne and moone / and sterres euery weye
 Right so men goostly / in this mayden free 109
 Sayen / of feith / the magnanymytee
 And eek the cleernesse hool of Sapience
 And sondry werkes / brighte of excellence 112

(17)

¶ And right so / as thise Philosophres write 113
 That heuene is swift and round / & eek brennynge
 Right so / was faire Cecile the white
 fful swift and bisy / euere in good werkyng 116
 And round & hool / in good perseuerynge
 And brennyng' euere in charite / ful brighte
 Now haue I yow declared / what she highte 119

Note to l. 120. ¶ gregorius in registro [Epist.] libro .10. Ad Eulogium patriarcham scribit/. Indicamus prætere[a] quia grauem hic interpretum difficultatem patitur! dum enim non sunt qui sensum de sensu expriment/ set transierre semper verborum proprietatem volunt omnem ductorum sensum confundunt/ &cetera. [Migne, Patrologia, vol. 77, col. 1099.]

(18)

This mayde bright Cecilie / as hir lyf seith Cecilia virgo
charissima.
 Was come of Romayns / and of noble kynde [Latin note,
see above]
 And from hir Cradel / vp fostred in the feith
 Of crist' and baar his gospel in hir mynde 123
 She neuere cessed / as I writen fynde
 Of hir prayere / and god to loue and drede
 Bisekyng hym / to kepe hir maydenhede 126

(19)

¶ And whan this mayden sholde / vn til a man 127
 Ywedded be / that was ful yong of age
 Which that ycleped was Valerian
 And day was comen / of hir mariage 130
 She ful deuout' and humble in hir corage
 Vnder hir robe of gold / that sat ful faire
 Hadde next hir flessch / yclad hire in an haire 133

(20)

¶ And whil that the Organs / maden melodie 134
 To god allone / in hir herte / thus soong she
 O · lord my soule / and eek my body gye
 Vnwemmed / lest that I confounded be 137
 And for his loue / that deyde vp on the tree
 Euery seconde / and thridde day she faste
 Ay biddyng^t in hir orisons ful faste 140

(21)

[Th]e nyght cam / and to bedde moste she gon ^[¹ Rotz. leaf 167, back]
 With hire housbonde / as ofte is the manere
 And priuely / to hym she seyde anon
 O swete / and wel biloued spouse deere 144
 Ther is a conseil / and ye wolde it heere
 Which that right fayn / I wolde vn to yow seye
 So that ye swere / ye shul it nat biwreye 147

(22)

¶ Valerian gan faste / vn to hir swere 148
 That for no cas / ne thyng þat myghte be
 He sholde neuere mo biwreyen here
 And thanne at erst / to hym seyde she 151
 I haue an Aungel / which that loueth me
 That with gret loue / wher so I wake or slepe
 Is redy ay / my body for to kepe 154

(23)

¶ And if that he / may feelen out of drede 155
 That ye me touche / or loue in vileynye
 He right anon / wol sleen yow with the dede
 And in youre youthe / thus ye shullen dye 158
 And if that ye / in clene loue me gye
 He wol yow loue as me / for youre clennesse
 And shewe to yow / his ioie and his brightnesse 161

(24)

¶ This Valerian / corrected as god wolde	162
Answerde agayn / if I shal trusten thee	
Lat me that Aungel seen / and hym biholde	
And if that it/ a verray Aungel be	165
Thanne wol I doon / as thow hast prayed me	
And if thow loue another man / for sothe	
Right with this swerd / than wol I sle yow bothe	168

(25)

¶ Cecile answerde / right in this wise	169
If that yow list the Aungel shal ye se	
So that ye trowe on crist and yow baptise	
Goth forth to Via Apia . quod she	172
That fro this town / ne stant but Milys thre	
And to the poure folkes / that ther dwellen	
Sey hem right thus / as that I shal yow tellen	175

(26)

¶ Telle hem / that I Cecile / yow to hem sente	[leaf 168]
To shewen yow / the goode Vrban the olde	
ffor secree nedes / and for good entente	
And whan that ye / Seint Vrban han biholde	179
Telle hym the wordes / whiche I to yow tolde	
And whan that he / hath purged you fro synne	
Thanne shal ye seen that Aungel / er we twynne	182

(27)

¶ This Valerian / is to the place gon	183
And right as hym was taught by his lernynge	
He foond / this holy olde Vrban anon	
Among the Seintes buryels lotynge	186
And he anon / with outen tarynge	
Dide his message / and whan that he it tolde	
Vrban for ioye / hise handes gan vp holde	189

(28)

¶ The teerys from hise eyen / leet he falle 190
 Almyghty lord / o Ihesu crist quod he
 Sowere of chaast conseil / hierde of vs alle
 The fruyt of thilke seed / of chastitee 193
 That thow hast sowe in Cecilie / taak to thee
 Lo lyk a bisy bee / with outen gyle
 Thee serueth ay / thyn owne thral Cecile 196

(29)

¶ ffor thilke spouse / that she took but now 197
 fful lyk a fiers leon / she sendeth heere
 As meke / as euere was any lamb to yow
 And with that word / anon ther gan appeere 200
 An old man / clad in white clothes cleere
 That hadde a book^t with *lettre* of gold in honde
 And gan / biforn Valerian to stonde 203

(30)

¶ Valerian as deed / fil doun for drede 204
 Whan he hym say / and he vp hente hym tho
 And on his book^t right thus he gan to rede
 O. lord / o. feith / o. god with oute mo 207
 O. cristendom / and fader of alle also
 Abouen alle / and oueral euery where
 Thise wordes / al with gold ywriten were 210

(31)

[¹W]han this was rad / thanne seyde this olde man [¹*Rats*,
 Leuestow this thyng^t or no / sey ye / or nay 1f168, bk]
 I leue al this thyng^t quod Valerian
 ffor sother thyng than this / I dar wel say 214
 Vnder the heuene / no wight thynke may
 Tho vanysshed this olde man / he nyste where
 And pope² Vrban / hym cristned right there [²*blotted out*]

(32)

¶ Valerian goth hom / and fynt Cecilie	218
In with his chambre / with an Aungel stonde	
This Aungel hadde / of Roses and of lillie	
Corones two / the whiche he bar in honde	221
And first to Cecile / as I vnderstonde	
He yaf that oon / and after gan he take	
That oother / to Valerian hir make	224

(33)

¶ With body clene / and with vnwemmed thought	225
Kepeth ay wel / thise corones quod he	
fro Paradys / to yow / haue I hem broght	
Ne neuere mo / ne shal they roten be	228
Ne lese hir swote sauour / trusteth me	
Ne neuere wight shal seen hem <i>with</i> his eye	
But he be chaast / and hate vileynye	231

(34)

¶ And thow Valerian / for thow so soone	232
Assentedest to good conseil also	
Sey what thee list and thow shalt han thy boone	
I haue a brother / quod Valerian tho	235
That in this world / I loue no man so	
I pray yow / that my brother may han grace	
To knowe the trouthe / as I do in this place	238

(35)

¶ The Aungel seyde / god liketh thy requeste	239
And bothe / with the palm of martirdom	
Ye shullen come / vn to his blisful feste	
And with that word / Tiburce his brother coom	242
And whan that he / the sauour vndernoon	
Which <i>þat</i> the Roses / and the lilies caste	
With Inne his herte / he gan to wondre faste	245

(36)

¶ And seyde / I wondre this tyme of the yere [leaf 169]
 Whennes / that swote sauour / cometh so
 Of Rose and lilies / that I smelle heere
 ffor thogh I hadde hem / in myne handes two 249
 The sauour myghte in me / no depper go
 The swete smel / that in myn herte I fynde
 Hath chaunged me / al in another kynde 252

(37)

¶ Valerian seyde / two corones han we 253
 Snow white and Rose reed / þat shynen clere
 Which þat thyne eyen / han no myght to se
 And as thow smellest hem / thurgh my prayere 256
 So shaltow seen hem / leue brother deere
 If it so be / thow wolt/ with outen slouthe
 Bileue aright and knowen verray trouthe 259

(38)

¶ Tiburce answerde / seystow this to me 260
 In soothnesse / or in dreem I herkne this
 In dremes quod Valerian / han we be
 Vn to this tyme / brother myn ywys 263
 But now at erst/ in trouthe oure dwellyng is
 How wostow this quod Tiburce / in what wyse
 Quod Valerian / that shal I thee deuyse 266

(39)

¶ The Aungel of god / hath me the trouthe ytaught 267
 Which thow shalt seen / if that thow wolt reneye
 The ydoles / and be clene / and ellis naught
 And of the myracle / of thise corones tweye 270
 Seint Ambrose / in his preface / list to seye
 Solempnely / this noble doctour deere
 Commendeth it and seith in this manere 273

(40)

¶ The palme of martirdom / for to receyue 274
 Seinte Cecile / fulfild of goddes yifte
 The world / and eek hir chambre gan she weyue
 Witnesse Tiburces / and Cecilies shrifte 277
 To whiche / god of his bountee wolde shifte
 Corones two / of floures wel smellynge
 And made his Aungel / hem the corones brynge 280

(41)

[1^h]e mayde hath broght men / to blisse aboute [¹ Rots. leaf
169, back]
 The world hath wist what it is worth certeyn
 Deuocion / of chastitee to loue
 Tho shewed hym Cecile / al open and pleyn 284
 That alle ydoles / nys but a thyng in veyn
 ffor they been downbe / and ther to they been deue
 And charged hym / hise ydoles for to leue 287

(42)

¶ Who so þat troweth nat this / a beest he is 288
 Quod tho Tiburce / if that I shal nat lye
 And she gan kisse his brest that herde this
 And was ful glad / he koude trouthe espye 291
 This day I take thee / for myn allye
 Seyde this blisful / faire mayde deere
 And after that she seyde as ye may heere 294

(43)

¶ Lo right so / as the loue of Crist quod she 295
 Made me thy brotheres wyf / right in that wise
 Anon for myn allie / heere take I thee
 Syn that thou wolt / thyne ydoles despise 298
 Go with thy brother now / and thee baptise
 And make thee clene / so þat thou mowe biholde
 The Aungeles face / of which thy brother tolde 301

(44)

¶ Tiburce answerde / and seyde brother deere 302
 ffirst tel me whider that I shal / and to what man
 To whom quod he / com forth with right^t good cheere
 I wol thee lede / vn to the pope¹ Vrban <sup>[¹ pope blotted out, and
 Bissop written over it.]</sup>
 Til Vrban / brother myn Valerian
 Quod tho Tiburce / woltow me thider lede
 Me thynketh / that it were a wonder dede 308

(45)

¶ Ne menestow nat Vrban / quod he tho 309
 That is so ofte / dampned to be deed
 And woneth in halkes / alwey to & fro
 And dar nat ones / putte forth his heed 312
 Men sholde hym brennen / in a fyr so reed
 If he were founde / or þat men myghte hym spye
 And we also / to bere hym compaignye 315

(46)

¶ And whil we seken / thilke diuinytee [leaf 170]
 That is yhyd / in heuene priuely
 Algate / ybrend in this world shul we be
 To whom Cecile / answerde boldely 319
 Men myghten dreden / wel and skilfully
 This lyf to lese / myn owene deere brother
 If thys were lyuyng oonly / and noon oother 322

(47)

¶ But ther is bettre lyf / in oother place 323
 That neuere shal be lost^t ne drede thee nought^t
 Which goddes sone / vs tolde thurgh his grace
 That fadres sone / hath alle thynges wroght^t 326
 And al that wroght is / with a skilful thocht^t
 The goost that fro the fader / gan procede
 Hath souled hem / with outen any drede 329

(48)

¶ By word and by myracle / he goddes sone 330
 Whan he was / in this world / declared heere
 That ther was oother lyf / ther men may wone
 To whom answerde Tiburce / o suster deere 333
 Ne seydestow right now / in this manere
 Ther nys but o god / lord in sothfastnesse
 And now of thre / how maystow bere witnesse 336

(49)

¶ That shal I telle quod she / er I go 337
 Right as a man / hath sapiences thre
 Memorie / engyn / and intellect also
 So in o beynge / of diuinytee 340
 Thre persones / may ther right wel be
 Tho gan she hym / ful bisily to preche
 Of cristes come / and of his peynes teche 343

(50)

¶ And manye pointes / of his passiõ 344
 How goddes sone / in this world was withholde
 To doon mankynde / pley n remission
 That was ybounde / in synne / and cares colde 347
 Al this thyng^t she vn to Tiburce tolde
 And after this / Tiburce in good entente
 With Valerian / to pope¹ Vrban he wente <sup>[¹ pope blotted out, and
byssop written over it.]</sup>

(51)

^{vrbanus}
 [2Th]at thanked god / and with glad herte and light^t [<sup>2 Rats.
if 170</sup>]
 He cristned hym / and made hym in that place
 Parfit in his lernyng^t goddes knyght^t
 And after this / Tiburce gat swich grace 354
 That euery day / he say in tyme and space
 The Aungel of god / and euery maner boone
 That he god axed / it was sped ful soone 357

(52)

¶ It were ful hard / by ordre for to seyn	358
How many wondres / Ihesus for hem wroghte	
But at the laste / to tellen short/ and pleyne	
The sergeantz / of the town of Rome hem soghte	361
And hem biforn Almache / the Prefect broghte	
Which hem opposed / and knew al hir entente	
And to the ymage of Iubiter / hem sente	364

(53)

¶ And seyde / who so wol nat sacrificse	365
Swape of his heed / this is my sentence heer	
Anon thise martirs / that I yow deuyse	
Oon Maximus / that was an Officer	368
Of the Prefectes / and his Corniculer	
Hem hente / and whan he forth the Seintes ladde	
Hym self he weep / for pitee that he hadde	371

(54)

¶ Whan Maximus / hadde herd the Seintes loore	372
He gat hym / of the tormentours leue	
And ladde hem to his hous / with oute moore	
And with hir prechyng ^r er that it were eue	375
They gonnen / fro the tormentours to reue	
And fro Maxime / and fro his folk echone	
The false feith / to trowe in god allone	378

(55)

¶ Cecile cam / whan it was woxen nyght	379
With preestes / that hem cristned alle yfeere	
And afterward / whan day was woxen light	
Cecile hym seyde / with a ful stedefast cheere	382
Now cristes owene knyghtes / leue and deere	
Cast al away / the werkes of derknesse	
And armeth yow / in armure of brightnesse	385

(56)

¶ Ye han for sothe / ydoon a greet bataille [leaf 171]
 Youre cours is doon / youre feith han ye conserved
 Goth to the corone of lyf / that may nat faille
 The rightful Iuge / which that ye han served 389
 Shal yeue it yow / as ye han it diserved
 And whan this thyng was seyde / as I deuyse
 Men ledde hem forth / to doon the sacrifice 392

(57)

¶ But whan they weren / to the place broght 393
 To tellen shortly / the conclusioun
 They nolde encense / ne sacrifice right noght
 But on hir knees / they setten hem adoun 396
 With humble herte / and sad deuocioun
 And losten / bothe hir heuedes / in the place
 Hir soules wenten / to the kyng of grace 399

(58)

¶ This *Maximus* / that say this thyng bityde 400
 With pitous teerys / tolde it anon right
 That he hir soules / saugh to heuene glyde
 With *Aungeles* / ful of cleernesse / and of light 403
 And with his word / conuerted many a wight
 ffor which *Almachius* / dide hym so bete
 With whippe of leed / til he his lyf gan lete 406

(59)

¶ *Cecile* hym took / and buried hym anon 407
 By *Tiburce* and *Valerian* softly
 With *Inne* hir buryng place / vnder the stoon
 And after this / *Almachius* hastily 410
 Bad hise Ministres / fecchen openly
Cecilie / so þat she myghte in his presence
 Doon sacrifice / and *Iubiter* encense 413

(60)

¶ But they conuerted / at hir wise loore 414
 Wepten ful sore / and yauen ful credence
 Vn to hir word / and cryden moore & moore
 Crist goddes sone / with outhen difference 417
 Is verray god / this is al oure sentence
 That hath so good a seruant / hym to serue
 This with o voys / we trowen / thogh we sterue 420

(61)

[¹Alm]achius / that herde of this doynge [¹Rats. lf 171, bk]
 Bad fecchen Cecilie / that he myghte hir se
 And alderfirst lo / this was his axynge
 What maner womman / artow. quod he 424
 I am a gentil womman born / quod she
 I axe thee quod he / thogh it the greue
 Of thy religion / and of thy bileue 427

(62)

¶ Ye han bigonne / youre question folily 428
 Quod she / that wolden two answeres conclude
 In o demande / ye axed lewedly
 Almachie answerde / vn to that similitude 431
 Of whennes comth / thyn answeyng so rude
 Of whennes quod she / whan that she was freyned
 Of conscience / and of good feith vnfeyned 434

(63)

¶ Almachius seyde / ne takestow noon hede 435
 Of my power / and she answerde hym / this
 Youre myght quod she / ful litel is to drede
 ffor euery / mortal mannes power nys 438
 But lyk a bladdre / ful of wynd ywis
 ffor with a nedles point whan it is blowe
 May al the boost of it be leyd ful lowe 441

(64)

¶ fful wrongfully / bigonne thow quod he	442
And yet in wrongt is al thy perseuerañce	
Wostow nat' how / oure myghty princes free	
Han thus comanded / and maad ordinañce	445
That euery cristen wight' shal han penañce	
But if that he / his cristendom withseye	
And goon al quy't if he wol it reneye	448

(65)

¶ Youre Prynces erren / as youre nobleye dooth	449
Quod tho Cecile / and with a wood sentence	
Ye make vs gilty / and is nat sooth	
ffor ye þat knowen wel / oure Innocence	452
ffor as muche / as we doon a reuerence	
To crist' and for we bere a cristen name	
Ye putte on vs / a cryme / & eek a blame •	455

(66)

¶ But we that knowen / thilke name so	[leaf 172]
ffor vertuous / we may it nat withseye	
Almache answerde / chees oon of thise two	
Do sacrifice / or cristendom reneye	459
That thow mowe now / escapen by that weye	
At which / this holy / blisful faire mayde	
Gan for to laughe / and to the Iuge she sayde	462

(67)

¶ O Iuge confus / in thy nycetee	463
Wiltow / that I reneye Innocence	
To maken me / a wikked wight' quod she	
Lo / he dissimuleth heere in audience	466
He stareth and woodeth / in his aduertence	
To whom Almachius / vnsely wrecche	
Ne wostow nat' how fer my myght may strecche	469

(68)

¶ Han noght oure myghty princes / to me yeuen 470
 Ye bothe power / and auctoritee
 To maken folk / to dyen or to lyuen
 Why spekestow so prowldy / thanne to me 473
 I speke noght^t but stedefastly quod she
 Nat proudly / for I seye / as for my syde
 We haten dedly / thilke vice of pryde 476

(69)

¶ And if thou drede nat^t a sooth to here ^{audire} 477
 Thanne wol I shewe / al openly by right^t
 That thou hast maad / a ful greet lesyng here ^{hic}
 Thou seist^t thy princes / han thee yeuen myght^t 480
 Bothe for to sleen / and for to quyken a wight^t
 Thou that ne mayst^t but oonly lyf byreue
 Thou hast noon oother power / ne no leue 483

(70)

¶ But thou mayst seyn / thy princes han thee maked 484
 Ministre of deeth / for if thou speke of me
 Thou lyst^t for thy power is ful naked
 Do wey thy boldnesse / seyde Almachius tho 487
 And sacrifice / to oure goddes / er thou go
 I recche nat^t what wrong^t that thou me profre
 ffor I kan suffre it/ as a Philosophre 490

(71)

[But¹] thilke wronges / may I nat endure [¹ *Rats.* leaf 172, back]
 [1^T]hat thou spekest^t of oure goddes here quod he
 Cecilie answerde / o nyce creature
 Thou seydest no word / syn thou spak to me 494
 That I ne knew ther-with thy nycetee
 And that thou were / in euery maner wise
 A lewed Officer / a veyn Iustise 497

(72)

¶ Ther lakketh no thyng ^t to thyne outter eyen	498
That thou nart blynd / for thyng þat we seen alle	
That is a stoon / that men may wel espien	
That ilke stoon / a god thou wolt it calle	501
I rede thee / lat thyn hand vp on it falle	
And taste it wel / and stoon thou shalt it fynde	
Syn that thou seest ^t nat / with thyne eyen blynde	504

(73)

¶ It is a shame / that the peple shal	505
So scornen thee / and laughe at thy folye	
ffor comenly / men woot it wel ouer al	
That myghty god / is in hise heuenes hye	508
And thise ymages / wel thou mayst espye	
To thee / ne to hem self / mowe nocht profite	
ffor in effect ^t they be nat worth a myte	511

(74)

¶ Thise / and swiche othere / seyde she	512
And he weex wrooth / and bad men sholde hir lede	
Hoom til hir hous / and in hir hous quod he	
Bren hire / right in a Bath of flambes rede	515
And as he bad / right so was doon the dede	
ffor in a Bath / they gonne hire faste shetten	
And nyght and day / greet fyr they vnder betten	518

(75)

¶ The longe nyght ^t and eek a day also	519
ffor al the fyr / and eek the Bathes hete	
She sat al coold / and feeled no wo	
It made hir nat ^t o drope for to swete	522
But in that Bath / hir lyf she moste lete	
ffor he Almachius / with a ful wikke entente	
To sleen hire in the Bath / his sonde sente	525

(76)

¶ Thre strokes in the nekke / he smoot hire tho [leaf 173]
 The tormentour / but for no maner chaunce
 He myghte noght^t smyte al hir nekke atwo
 And for ther was / that tyme an ordinaunce 529
 That no man / sholde doon man swich penaunce
 The ferthe strook to smyten / softe or soore
 This tormentour / ne dorste do namoore 532

(77)

¶ But half deed / with hir nekke ycoruen there 533
 He lefte hir lye / and on his wey he went^t
 The cristen folk^t whiche þat aboute hire were
 With shetes / han the blood ful faire yhent^t 536
 Thre dayes / lyued she in this torment^t
 And neuere cessed / hem the feith to teche
 That she hadde fostred / hem she gan to preche 539

(78)

¶ And hem she yaf / hir moebles / and hir thyng^t 540
 And to the Pope¹ Vrban / bitook hem tho <sup>[¹ Pope croxt out, and
byssop written over it.]</sup>
 And seyde / I axed þis of heuene kyng^t
 To han respit^t thre dayes / and namo 543
 To recomende to yow / er that I go
 Thise soules / lo / and þat I myghte do werche
 Here of myn hous / perpetuelly a cherche 546

(79)

¶ Seint Vrban / with hise deknes pryuely 547
 The body fette / and buryed it by nyghte
 Among hise othere Seintes honestly
 Hir hous / the chirche of Seinte Cecilie highte 550
 Seint Vrban halwed it/ as he wel myghte
 In which / in to this day / in noble wyse
 Men doon to crist^t and to his seinte seruyse . 553

¶ Here is ended / the Nonnes tale 𐀀

SIDE-NOTES TO CLERK'S TALE, HENGWRT MS.

(From Petrarch's Latin original: see the Society's *Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*.)

[As there is no room in this print for the Latin notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines (and pages of the Six-Text) to which they refer.]

p. 404, l. 44. ¶ Est ad ytalie latus occiduū vesulus [ex Appennini] lugis mons altissimus qui vertice nu[bila super]aus liquido sese ingerit etheri / Mons [suapte] nobilis natura / padi ortu nobilissimus qu[i latere] fonte lapsus exiguo orientem contra solem fert[ur &c.] [MS, leaf 173, back.]

p. 405, l. 57. ¶ Inter cetera ad radicem Vesuli terra Saluciarum vicis & castellis. [MS, leaf 174.]

p. 412, l. 282. ¶ vt expeditis curis alijs ad visendum domini sui sponsam cum puellis comitibus properaret. [MS, leaf 177, back.]

p. 412, l. 295. ¶ quum Walterus cogitabundus incedens eamque compellans nomine. [MS, leaf 177, back.]

p. 414, l. 337. ¶ Et insolito tanti hospitis aduentu stupidam inuenit/ [MS, leaf 178.]

p. 414, l. 344. ¶ Et patri tuo placet inquit & michi vt vxor mea sis / et credo idipsum tibi placeat / set habeo ex te querere &cetera. [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 414, l. 356. ¶ Sine vlla frontis aut verbi impugnacione. [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 414, l. 358. ¶ Nil ego vnquam sciens nedum faciam set etiam cogitabo quod contra animum tuum sit/ nec tu aliquid facies / et si me mori iusseris quod moleste feram. [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 415, l. 372. ¶ dehinc ne quid reliquiarum fortune veteris nouam inferat in domum / nudari eam iussit/ [MS, leaf 178, back.]

p. 416, l. 400. // Atque apud omnes supra fidem cara & venerabilis facta est/ vix quod hijs ipsis qui illius originem nouerant/ persuaderi posset Ianicule natam esse tantus vite / tantus morum decor ea verborum grauitas atque dulcedo quibus omnium animos nexu sibi magni amoris astrinxerat/ [MS, leaf 179.]

p. 416, l. 421. ¶ Sic Walterus humili quidem set insigni ac prospero matrimonio honestatis summa dei in pace &cetera. [MS, leaf 179, back.]

p. 416, l. 425. ¶ Quodque eximiam virtutem tanta sub inopia latitantem tam perspicaciter deprendisset vulgo prudentissimus habebatur. [MS, leaf 179, back.]

p. 416, l. 428. *Neque vero solers sponsa muliebria tantum ac domestica / set vbi res posceret publica eciam subibat officia.* [MS, leaf 179, back.]

p. 417, l. 435. ¶ viro absente lites patrie / nobilium discordias dirimens atque componens tam grauib[us] responsis / tantaque maturitate & Iudicij equitate vt omnes ad salutem publicam demissam celo feminam predicarent. [MS, leaf 179, back.]

p. 417, l. 449. ¶ cepit [ut fit interdum Waltherum cum] iam [ablactata esset infantula] mirabilis q[ue]dam quam laudabilis] cupiditas sat[is] expertam care fidem] coniugis experien[di] alcius & iterum] atque iterum retem[ptandi]. [MS, leaf 180.]

p. 422, l. 603. ¶ Par alacritas atque sedalitas solitum obsequium / idem amor nulla filie mencio. [MS, leaf 182.]

p. 422, l. 610. ¶ transiuerant hoc / in statu anni .4. dum ecce grauida &cetera. [MS, leaf 182.]

p. 423, l. 624. ¶ Et olim ait audisti populum meum egre nostrum ferre connubium &cetera. [MS, leaf 182, back.]

p. 424, l. 659. ¶ ffac sen[ten]ciam tibi placere quod moriar volens moriar. [MS, leaf 183.]

p. 426, l. 722. ¶ ceperit sensi[m de Waltero] decolor fama [crebescere.] [MS, leaf 184.]

p. 436, l. 1037. vnum bona fide precor ac moneo / ne hanc / illis aculeis agites / quibus alteram agitasti namque & iunior & delicacius nutrita est / pati quantum ego vt reor non valeret / [MS, leaf 188, back.]

p. 439, l. 1142. ¶ hanc historiam stilo nunc alto retexere vis[um fuit] non tum ideo / vt matronas nostri temporis [ad] imitandam huius vxoris pacienciam que mich[i] inimitabilis videtur / quam vt legentes ad imitandam saltem femine constanciam excitarentur

¶ vt que hec viro suo prestitit / hoc prestare deo nostro audeat quilibet / vt Iacobus ait Apostolus / Intemptator sit malorum & ipse neminem temptat / probat tamen et sepe nos multis ac grauib[us] flagellis excerceri sinit / non vt animum nostrum sciat / quem sciuit antequam crearemur &cetera. [MS, leaf 190.]

GROUP E. FRAGMENT VI.

§ 1. THE CLERK'S HEAD-LINK.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ The Prohemie of the Clerkys tale of Oxenford^k

[leaf 173, back]

S Ire clerk of Oxenford / oure hoost sayde
Ye ride as coy / and stille as dooth a mayde
Were newe spoused / sitt yng at the bord
This day ne herde I / of youre tonge a word 4
I trowe ye studie / aboute som Sophyme
But Salomon seith / euery thyng hath tyme
¶ ffor goddes sake / as beth of better cheere
It is no tyme / for to studien heere 8
Tel vs som murie tale / by youre fey
ffor what man / that is entred in a pley
He nedes moot / vn-to the pley assente
But precheth nat / as freres doon in lente 12
To maken vs / for oure olde synnes wepe
Ne that thy tale / make vs nat to slepe
¶ Tel vs / som murye thyng of auentures
Your *termes* / youre colours / and youre figures 16
Kepe hem in stoor / til so be ye endite
Heigh stile / as whan þat men to kynges write
Speketh so pley n at this tyme / we yow preye
That we may vnderstonde / what ye seye 20
¶ This worthy clerk / benyg nely answerde
Hoost quod he / I am vnder youre yerde
Ye han of vs / as now the gouerna nce
And therefore / wol I do yow obeisa nce 24

As fer / as reson asketh hardily	
I wol yow telle a tale / which that I	
Lerned at Padwe / of a worthy Clerk'	
As proued / by his wordes and his werk'	28
He is now deed / and nayled in his Chestes	
I pray to god / so yeue his soule reste	
¶ ffraunceys Petrak' the lauryat poete	
Highte this clerk' whos Rethoryk swete	32
Enlumyned al Ytaille / of Poetrie	
As Lynyan dide / of Philosophie	
Or lawe / or oother art particuler	
But deth / þat wol nat suffre vs dwellen her	36
But as it were / a twynklyng of an eye	[leaf 174]
Hem bothe hath slayn / and alle shul we dye	
¶ But forth to tellen / of this worthy man	
That taughte me this tale / as I bigan	40
I seye þat first' with heigh stile he enditeth	
Er he / the body of his tale writeth	
A prohemie / in which discryueth he	
Pemond / and of Saluces the contree	[Latin note, p. 402] 44
And speketh of Appenyn / the hilles hye	
That been the boundes / of west lumbardye	
And of Mouut Vesulus / in special	
Wher as the Poo / out of a welle smal	48
Taketh his firste spryngyng / and his cours	
That Estward / ay encreseth in his cours	
To Emeleward / to fferare / and Venyse	
The which / a long thyng were to deuyse	52
And trewely / as to my Iuggement'	
Me thynketh it' a thyng inpertinent'	
Saue þat he wole / conuoien his matere	
But this his tale / which þat ye shal heere	56

¶ Here bigynneth the tale 𐀚

Ther is / at the west syde of Ytaille 57
 Doun at the roote / of Vesulus the colde [Latin note,
p. 402]

A lusty playne / habundant of vitaille ¶ grata planicies

Wher many a tour and town / thow mayst biholde 60

That founded were / in tyme of fadres olde

And many another / delitable sighte

And Saluces / this noble contree highte 63

¶ A Markys whilom / lord was of that lond 64

As were his worthy eldres hym bifore

And obeysant ay redy to his hond

Were alle his liges / bothe lasse and moore 67

Thus in delit he lyueth / and hath doon yooore

Biloued and drad / thurgh fauour of ffortune

Bothe of his lordes / and of his commune 70

[Th¹]er with he was / to speke as of lynage [¹ Rats. lf 174, bk]

The gentileste / yborn of Lumbardye

A fair persone / and strong^r and yong of age

And ful of honour / and of curteisye 74

Discret ynogh / his contree for to gye

Saue in some thynges / þat he was to blame

And Walter / was this yonge lordes name 77

¶ I blame hym thus / that he considered noght^t 78

In tyme comynge / what myghte hym bityde

But on his lust present^t was al his thoght^t

As for to hauke / and hunte on euery syde 81

Wel neigh / alle oothere cures leet he slyde

And eek he nolde / and that was worst of alle

Wedde no wyf / for noght þat may bifalle 84

¶ Oonly that point' his peple bar so soore 85
 That flokmele on a day / they to hym wente cateruatim.
 And oon of hem / þat wisest was of loore
 Or ellis / þat the lord / best wolde assente 88
 That he sholde telle hym / what his peple mente
 Or ellis koude he / shewe wel swich matere
 He to the Markys seyde / as ye shal heere 91

¶ O noble Markys / youre humanitee // tua inquit humanitas
optime Marchio
 Assureth vs / and yeueth vs hardynesse
 As ofte / as tyme is of necessitee
 That we to yow / mowe telle oure heuynesse 95
 Accepteth lord / now of youre gentillesse
 That we with pitous herte / vn to yow pleyne
 And lat youre erys / noght my voys disdeyne 98

¶ Al haue I noght to doone / in this matere 99
 Moore than another man / hath in this place
 Yet for as muche / as ye my lord so deere
 Han alwey shewed me / fauour and grace 102
 I dar the better / aske of yow a space
 Of audience / to shewen oure requeste
 And ye my lord / to doon right as yow leste 105

¶ ffor certes lord so wel vs liketh yow [leaf 175] 106
 And al youre werk' and euere han doon / þat we
 Ne kouden nat vs self / deuysen how
 We myghte lyuen / in moore felicitye 109
 Saue o thyng lord / if it youre wille be
 That for to been a wedded man / yow leste
 Thanne were youre peple / in souereyn hertes reste 112

¶ Boweth youre nekke / vnder that blisful yok' 113
 Of souereyntee / noght of seruyse
 Which that men clepe / spousaille / or wedlok'
 And thenketh lord / among youre thoghtes wise 116

How þat oure dayes passe / in sondry wyse
 ffor thogh we slepe / or wake / or renne / or ryde
 Ay fleeth the tyme / it nel no man abyde 119

¶ And thogh youre grene youthe / floure as yit 120
 In crepeth age alwey / as stille as stoon
 And deth / manaceth euery age and smyt
 In ech estat for ther escapeth noon 123
 And also certeyn / as we knowe echon
 That we shal dye / as vncerteyn we alle
 Been of that day / whan deth shal on vs falle 126

¶ Accepteth thanne of vs / the trewe entente 127
 That neuere yet refuseden thyn heste
 And we wol lord / if þat ye wol assente
 Chese yow a wyf / in short tyme at the leeste 130
 Born of the gentileste / and of the meeste
 Of al this lond / so þat it oghte seme
 Honour / to god and yow / as we kan deme 133

¶ Delyuere vs / out of al this bisy drede 134
 And tak a wyf / for heighe goddes sake
 ffor if so bifelle / as god forbede
 That thurgh youre deeth / youre ligne sholde slake 137
 And that a straunge Successour / sholde take
 Your heritage / o. wo were vs alyue
 Wher fore / we pray yow / hastily to wyue 140

[Hir¹] meke prayere / and hir pitous cheere [*1 Rats. If 175, bk*]
 Made the Markys herte / han pitee
 Ye wol quod he / myn owene peple deere
 To that I neuere erst thoghte / streyne me 144
 I me reioysed / of my libertee
 That selde tyme / is founde in mariage
 Ther I was free / I moot ben in seruage 147

- ¶ But nathelees / I se youre trewe entente 148
 And truste vp on youre wit and haue doon ay
 Wher fore / of my free wyl / I wol assente
 To wedde me / as soone as euere I may 151
 But ther as ye / han profred me to day
 To chese me a wyf / I yow relese
 That choys / and pray yow of that profre cesse 154
- ¶ ffor god it woot þat children ofte ben 155
 Vnlyk / hir worthy eldres hem bifore
 Bountee comth al of god / nat of the stren
 Of which / they been engendred and ybore 158
 I triste in goddes bountee / and ther fore
 My mariage / and myn estat and reste
 I hym bitake / he may doon as hym leste 161
- ¶ Lat me allone / in chesyng of my wyf 162
 That charge vp on my bak I wol endure
 But I pray yow / and charge vp on youre lyf
 That what wyf þat I take / ye me assure 165
 To worshiþe hire / whil þat hir lyf may dure
 In word and werk / bothe here and euerywhere
 As she / an Emperours doghter were 168
- ¶ And ferther moore / this shal ye swere / þat ye 169
 Agayn my choys / shal neither grucche ne stryue
 ffor sith / I shal forgoon my libertee
 At your requeste / as euere mote I thryue 172
 Ther as myn herte is set / ther wol I wyue
 And but ye wol assente / in swich manere
 I pray yow / speketh namoore of this matere 175
- ¶ With hertly wyl / they sworn and assenten [leaf 176]
 To al this thyng ther seyde no wight nay
 Bisekyng hym of grace / er þat they wenten
 That he wolde / graunten hem a certein day 179

Of his spousaille / as soone as euere I may ffor yet alwey / the peple som what dredde Lest that the Markys / no wyf wolde wedde	182
¶ He graunted hem a day / swich as hym leste On which / he wolde be wedded sikerly And seyde / he dide al this at hir requeste And they / with humble entente buxomly Knelynge vp on hir knees / ful reuerently Hym thanken alle / and thus they han an ende Of hir entente / and hom agayn they wende	183 186 189
And her vp on / he to his officers Comaundeth / for the feste to purueye And to his pryuee knyghtes and Squyers Swich charge yaf / as hym liste on hem leye And they / to his comandement obeye And ech of hem / dooth al his diligence To doon / vn-to the feste reuerence	190 193 196

¶ Explicit prima pars 𐀚

¶ Incipit pars secunda 𐀚

N Oght fer / fro thilke paleys honourable Wher as this Markys / shoope his mariage Ther stood a Throope / of site delitable In which þat poure folk / of that village Hadden hir bestes / and hir herbergage And of hir labour / token hir sustenance After that the erthe / yaf hem habundance	197 200 203
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[A ¹]mong this poure folk / ther dwelte a man [¹ Rats. 1f176, bk] Which þat was holden / pourest of hem alle But heighe god / som tyme senden kan His grace / in to a litel Oxes Stalle Ianicula / men of that Throope hym calle A doghter hadde he / fair ynogh to sighte And Grisildis / this yonge mayden highte	207 210
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- ¶ But for to speke / of vertuous beautee 211
 Thanne was she / oon the faireste vnder the sonne
 ffor pourelliche / yfostred vp was she
 No likerous lust was thurgh hir herte yronne 214
 Wel offer of the welle / than of the tonne
 She drank and for she wolde vertu plese
 She knew wel labour / but noon ydel ese 217
- ¶ But thogh this mayde / tendre were of age 218
 Yet in the brest of hir virginitee
 Ther was enclosed / rype and sad corage
 And in gret reuerence / and charitee 221
 Hir olde poure fader / fostred she
 A fewe sheepe / spynnyng / on feld she kepte
 She wolde noght been ydel / til she slepte 224
- ¶ And whan she homward cam / she wolde brynge 225
 Wortes / or othere herbes / tymes ofte
 The whiche she shredde / and seeth for his lyuyng
 And made hir bed ful harde / and no thyng softe 228
 And ay she kepte / hir fadres lyf on lofte
 With euery obeysance / and diligence
 That child may doon / to fadres reuerence 231
- ¶ Vp on Grisilde / this poure creature 232
 fful ofte sithe / this Markys sette his eye
 And he / on huntynge rood *per* auenture
 And whan it fil / þat he myghte hire espie 235
 He noght wit wantowne lookyng of folye
 Hise eyen caste on hire / but in sad wyse
 Vp on hir cheere / he wolde hym ofte auyse 238
- ¶ Commendynge in his herte / hir wommanhede [leaf 177]
 And eek hir vertu / passyng any wight
 Of so yong age / as wel in cheere as dede
 ffor thogh the peple / hath no greet insight 242

In vertue / he considered ful right	
Hir bountee / and disposed þat he wolde	
Wedde hire oonly / if euere he wedden sholde	245
¶ The day of weddyng cam / but no wight kan	246
Telle what womman / þat it sholde be	
ffor which merueille / wondred many a man	
And seyden / whan they were in priuete	249
Wol nat oure lord / yet leue his vanytee	
Wol he nat wedde / allas the while	
Why wol he thus / hym self and vs bigyle	252
¶ But nathelees / this Markys hath doon make	253
Of gemmes / set in gold and in Asure	
Broches and rynges / for Grisildis sake	
And of hir clothyng took he the mesure	256
Of a mayde / lyk to hir stature	
And eek of othere / aournementes alle	
That vn-to swich a weddyng sholde falle	259
¶ The tyme of vndren / of the same day	260
Approcheth / þat this weddyng sholde be	
And al the palays / put was in array	
Bothe halle and chambres / ech in his degree	263
Houses of office / stuffed with plentee	
Ther maystow seen / of deynteuous vitaille	
That may be founde / as fer as last Ytaille	266
¶ This Roial Markys / richeliche arrayed	267
Lordes and ladys / in his compaignye	
The whiche / þat to the feste were yprayed	
And of his retenue / the Bachilrye	270
With many a sown / of sondry melodye	
Vn to the village / of the which I tolde	
In this array / the righte wey han holde	273

[Gri^l]silde of this / god woot ful Innocent^t [¹ *Rats.* leaf 177, back]
 [T¹]hat for hire shapen was / al this array
 To fecchen water / at a welle / is went^t
 And cometh hom / as soone as euer she may 277
 ffor wel she hadde herd seyð / þat thilke day
 The Markys sholde wedde / and if she myghte
 She wolde fayn han seyn / som of that sighte 280

¶ She thoghte / I wole *with* othere maydens stonde 281
 That been my felawes / in oure dore and se [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 The Markisesse / and therfore wol I fonde
 To doon at hom / as soone as it may be 284
 The labour / which þat longeth vn to me
 And thanne I may / at leyser hir biholde
 Yf she this wey / vn to the Castel holde 287

¶ And as she wolde / ouer the thresshold gon 288
 The Markys cam / and gan hire for to calle
 And she sette down / hir water pot anon
 Bisyde the thresshold / in an Oxes Stalle 291
 And down vp on hir knees / she gan to falle
 And with sad contenance / kneleth stille
 Til she hadde herd / what was the lordes wille 294

¶ This thoughtful Markys / spak vn to this mayde [*Latin note*,
 p. 402]
 ful sobrelly / and seyde in this manere
 Where is youre fader / o. Grisildis he sayde
 And she with reuerence / in humble cheere 298
 Answerde / lord he is al redy heere
 And she goth / with outen lenger lette
 And to the Markys / she hir fader fette 301

¶ He by the hand / than took this olde man 302
 And seyde thus / whan he hym hadde asyde
 Ianicula / I neither may ne kan
 Lenger / the plesance of myn herte hyde 305

If that thow vouche sauf / what so bityde
 Thy doghter wol I take / er that I wende
 As for my wyf / vn to my lyues ende 308

¶ Thow louest me / I woot it wel certeyn [leaf 178] 309
 And art my feithful lige man ybore
 And al that liketh me / I dar wel seyn
 It liketh thee / and specially ther fore 312
 Tel me that point / that I haue seyde bfore
 If that thow wolt vn to that purpos drawe
 To take me / as for thy sone in lawe 315

¶ The sodeyn cas / this man astoneyd so 316
 That reed he weex abayst and al quakyng
 He stood / vnnethe seyde he wordes mo
 But oonly this / lord quod he / my willyng 319
 Is as ye wole / ne ayeins youre likyng
 I wol no thyng ye be my lord so deere
 Right as yow list / gouerneth this matere 322

¶ Yet wol I / quod this Markys / softly 323
 That in thy chambre / .I. and thow. and she
 Haue a collacion / and wostow why
 ffor .I. wol aske / if it hir wille be 326
 To be my wyf / and rule hire after me
 And al this shal be doon / in thy presence
 I wol noght speke / out of thyn audience 329

¶ And in the chambre / whil they were aboute 330
 Hir tretys / which as ye shal after heere
 The peple cam / vn to the hous with oute
 And wondred hem / in how honeste manere 333
 And tentify / she kepte hir fader deere
 But outrely / Grisildis wondre myghte
 ffor neuere eft ne saw she swich a sighte 336

¶ No wonder is / thogh þat she were astoned [Latin note, p. 402]
 To seen so greet a gest^t come in to place
 She neuere was / to swiche gestes woned
 ffor which she looked / with ful pale face 340
 But shortly / forth this matere for to chace
 Thise arn the wordes / þat this Markys sayde
 To this benygne / verray feithful mayde 343

[Gri]lilde he seyde / ye shal wel vnderstonde [¹ Rats. 1f 178, bk.]
[Latin note, p. 402]
 It liketh to youre fader / and to me
 That I yow wedde / and eek it may so stonde
 As I suppose / ye wol þat it so be 347
 But thise demandes / aske I first quod he
 That sith it shal be doon / in hastif wyse
 Wol ye assente / or ellis yow auyse 350

¶ I sey this / be ye redy / with good herte 351
 To al my lust and þat I frely may
 As me best thynketh / do yow laughe or smerte
 And neuere ye to grucche it/ nyght ne day 354
 And eek whan I sey ye / ne sey nat nay
 Neither by word / ne frownyng contenance [Latin note, p. 402]
 Swere this / and heere I swere oure alliance 357

¶ Wondrynge vp on this word / quakyng for drede [Latin note,
 p. 402]
 She seyde lord / vndigne / or vnworthy
 I am / to thilke honour / þat ye me bede
 But as ye wol your self/ right so wol I 361
 And heere I swere / that neuere willyngly
 In werk ne thought I nel yow disobeye
 ffor to bē deed / thogh me were looth to deye 364

¶ This is ynough / Grisilde myn quod he 365
 And forth he goth / with a ful sobre cheere
 Out at the dore / and after that cam she
 And to the peple / he seyde in this manere 368

This is my wyf quod he / that standeth heere
 Honureth hire / and loueth hire I preye
 Who so me loueth / there is namoore to seye 371

¶ And for þat no thyng^t of hir olde gere [*Latin note*, p. 402] 372
 She sholde brynge in to his hous / he bad
 That wommen / sholde dispoylen hir right there
 Of which / thise ladys / were noght right glad 375
 To handle hir clothes / wher Inne she was clad
 But nathelees / this mayde bright of hewe
 firo foot to heed / they clothed han al newe 378

¶ Hir herys han they kembd^t / that laye vntressed [*leaf 179*]
 fful rudely / and with hir fyngres smale
 A coroune on hir heed / they han ydressed
 And sette hire ful Nowches grete and smale 382
 Of hir array / what sholde I make a tale
 Vnnethe the peple hir knew / for hir fairnesse
 Whan she translated was / in swich richesse 385

¶ This Markys / hath hire spoused with a ryng^t 386
 Broght for the same cause / and thanne hir sette
 Vp on an hors snow whyt^t and wel amblyng^t
 And to his palays / er he lenger lette 389
 With ioyful peple / þat hir ledde and mette
 Convoied hire / and thus / the day they spende
 In reuel / til the sonne gan descende 392

¶ And shortly / forth this tale for to chace 393
 I seye / þat to this newe Markysesse
 God hath / swich fauour sent hire of his grace
 That it ne semed nat^t by liklynesse 396
 That she / was born and fed in rudenesse
 As in a cote / or in an Oxes Stalle
 But norissed / in an Emperours halle 399

¶ To euery wight^t she woxen is so deere [*Latin note*, p. 402] 400
 And worshipful / þat folk^t ther she was bore
 That from hir burthe / knewe hire yeer by yeere
 Vnnethe trowed they / but dorste han swore 403
 That to Ianicle / of which I spak bifore
 She doghter were / for as by coniecture
 Hem thoughte / she was another creature 406

¶ ffor thogh þat euere / vertuous was she 407
 She was encessed / in swich excellence
 Of thewes goode / yset in heigh bountee
 And so discreet^t and fair of eloquence 410
 So benygne / and so digne of reuerence
 And koude so / the peples herte embrace
 That ech hir louede / that looked on hir face 413

[N¹]oght oonly / of Saluce in the town [*1 Rats. leaf 179, back*]
 Publißed was / the bountee of hir name
 But eek bisyde / in many a Regioun
 If oon seyde wel / another seyde the same 417
 So spradde / of hir heighe bountee the fame
 That men and wommen / as wel yonge as olde
 Goon to Saluce / on hire to biholde 420

¶ Thus Walter lowely / nay but roially [*Latin note*, p. 402] 421
 Wedded / with fortunat honestetee
 In goddes pees / lyueth ful esily
 At hom / and outward grace ynow hath he 424
 And for he saugh / þat vnder lowe degree [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 Was ofte vertu hyd / the peple hym helde
 A prudent man / and that is seyn ful selde 427

¶ Noght oonly / this Grisildis / thurgh hir wit [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 Koude al the feet^t of wifly humblenesse
 But eek^t whan þat the cas required it
 The commune profit^t koude she redresse 431

Ther nas discord / rancour / ne heynesse
 In al that land / þat she ne koude apese
 And wisly / brynge hem alle in reste and ese 434

¶ Thogh þat hir housbond absent were / anon [*Latin note*, p. 402]
 If gentil men / or othere of hir contree
 Were wrothe / she wolde bryngen hem aton
 So wise / and rype wordes hadde she 438
 And Iuggementz / of so greet equitye
 That she from heuene sent was / as men wende
 Peple to saue / and euery wrong tamende 441

¶ Nat longe tyme after that this Grisild
 Was ywedded / she a doghter hath ybore
 Al hadde hir leuere / haue had a knaue child
 Glad was the Markys / and the folk ther fore 445
 ffor thogh a mayde child / coome al bfore
 She may / vn to a knaue child atteyne
 By liklyhede / syn she nys nat bareyne 448

Explicit secunda pars 𐀚

Incipit/ pars tercia.

THer fil / as it bifalleth tymes mo [*leaf 180. Latin note, p. 402*]
 Whan þat this child / hath souked but a throwe
 This Markys / in his herte longeth so
 To tempte his wyf/ hir sadnesse for to knowe 452
 That he ne myghte / out of his herte throwe
 This merueilous desir / his wyf tassaye
 Nedelees god woot he thoghte hire for tafraye 455

¶ He hadde assayed hire / ynow bfore 456
 And fond hir euere good / what neded it
 Hir for to tempte / and alwey moore & moore
 Thogh som men preyse it for a subtil wit 459
 But as for me / I seye þat yuele it sit
 Tassaye a wyf / whan þat it is no nede
 And putten hire / in angwyssþ and in drede 462

ffor which / this Markys / wroghte in this manere 463
 He cam allone a nyght^t ther as she lay
 With steerne face / and with ful trouble cheere
 And seyde thus / Grisilde quod he that day 466
 That I yow took^t out of youre poure array
 And putte yow in estat^t of heigh noblesse
 Ye haue nat^t that forgeten as I gesse 469

 ¶ I seye Grisilde / this present dignitee 470
 In which þat I haue put yow / as I trowe
 Maketh yow / nat foryetful for to be
 That I yow took^t in poure estat ful lowe 473
 ffor any wele / ye mote your seluen knowe
 Tak hede of euery word / þat I yow seye
 Ther is no wight^t þat hereth it but we tweye 476

 ¶ Ye woot your self wel / how þat ye cam heere 477
 In to this hous / it is nat longe ago
 And thogh to me / þat ye be lief and deere
 Vn to my gentils / ye be no thyng so 480
 They seyn / to hem / it is greet shame & wo
 ffor to be subgitz / and been in seruage
 To thee / that born art^t of a smal village 483

 ¶ [An^l]d namely / sith thy doghter was ybore ^[¹ *Rats.* leaf 180, back]
 Thise wordes / han they spoken doutelees
 But I desire / as I haue doon bfore
 To lyue my lyf *with* hem / in reste and pees 487
 I may nat^t in this cas be recchelees
 I moot doon *with* thy doghter / for the beste
 Nat as I wolde / but as my peple leste 490

 ¶ And yet god woot^t this is ful looth to me 491
 But nathelees / with outen youre wityng^t
 I wol nat doon / but this wol I quod he
 That ye to me assente / as in this thyng^t 494

Shewe now youre pacience / in youre wirkyng^t
 That ye me highte / and swore in yone village
 That day / þat maked was oure mariage 497

¶ Whan she hadde herd al this / she noght amened 498
 Neither in word / or cheere / or contenance Nec verbo mota /
 nec vultu.
 ffor as it semed / she was nat agreued
 She seyde lord / al lith in youre plesance 501
 My child and I / with hertly obeisance
 Been youre al / and ye mowe saue or spille
 Youre owene thyng^t werketh after youre wille 504

¶ Ther may no thyng^t god so my soule saue 505
 Liken to yow / þat may displesen me
 Ne I ne desire / no thyng for to haue
 Ne drede for to lese / saue oonly thee / vel ye 508
 This wyl is in myn herte / and ay shal be
 No lengthe of tyme / or deth may this deface
 Ne chaunge my corage / to oother place 511

¶ Glad was this Markys / of hir answeyng^t 512
 But yet he feyned / as he were nat so
 Al drery was his cheere / and his lookyng^t
 Whan þat he sholde / out of the chambre go 515
 Soone after this / a furlang wey or two
 He pryuely / hath told al his entente
 Vn to a man / and to his wyf hym sente 518

¶ A maner sergeant / was this priuee man [leaf 181] 519
 The which þat feithful ofte / he founden hadde
 In thynges grete / and eek swich folk wel kan
 Doon execucioñ / in thynges badde 522
 The lord knew wel / that he [hy]m loued and dradde
 And whan this sergeant^t wiste his lordes wille
 In to the chambre / he stalked hym ful stille 525

¶ Madame he seyde / ye mote foryeue it me 526
 Thogh I do thyng^s to which I am constreyned
 Ye ben so wys / þat ful wel knowe ye
 That lordes hestes / mowe nat ben yfeyned 529
 They mowe wel been / biwailed / or compleyned
 But men mote nede / vn to hir lust obeye
 And so wol I / ther is namoore to seye 532

¶ This child / I am comaunded for to take 533
 And spak namoore / but out the child he hente
 Despitously / and gan a cheere make
 As thogh he wolde / han slayn it er he wente 536
 Grisildis moot al suffre / and al consente
 And as a lamb / she sitteth meke and stille
 And leet this crewel sergeant doon his wille 539

¶ Suspecious was / the diffame of this man ¶ *Suspecta viri fama.*
 Suspect his face / suspect his word also ¶ *Suspecta facies.*
 Suspect / the tyme / in which he this bigan ¶ *Suspecta hora.*
 Allas hir doghter / þat she loued so ¶ *Suspecta erat oracio.*
 She wende / he wolde / han slayn it right tho
 But nathelees / she neither weep^e ne syked
 Conformynge hire / to that the Markys liked 546

¶ But at the laste / speken she bigan 547
 And mekely / she to the sergeant preyde
 So as he was / a worthy gentil man
 That she moste kisse hir child / er þat it deyde 550
 And on hir barm / this litel child she leyde
 With ful sad face / and gan the child to blesse
 And lulled it and after gan it kesse 553

¶ [A¹]nd thus she seyde / in hir benygne voys <sup>[¹ *Eats.* leaf
181, back]</sup>
 ffare wel my child / I shal thee neuere see
 But sith I thee / haue marked with the croys
 Of thilke fader / blessed mote he be 557

That for vs deyde / vp on a croys of tree
 Thy soule litel child / I hym bitake
 ffor this nyght shaltow dyen for my sake 560

¶ I trowe / that to a Norice in this cas 561
 It hadde been hard / this routhe for to se
 Wel myghte a moder / haue cryd allas
 But nathelees / so sad stedefast was she 564
 That she endured / al aduersitee
 And to the Sergeant mekely she sayde
 Haue here agayn / youre litel yonge mayde 567

¶ Goth now quod she / and doth my lordes heste 568
 But o thyng wol I pray yow / of youre grace
 That but my lord / forbad yow at the leeste
 Burieth this litel body / in som place 571
 That bestes / ne no bryddes / it to-race
 But he no word / wol to that purpos seye
 But took the child / and wente vp on his weye 574

¶ This sergeant cam / vn to his lord agayn 575
 And of Grisildis wordes / and hir cheere
 He tolde hym poynt for poynt in short and playn
 And hym presenteth / with his doghter deere 578
 Som what this lord / hadde routhe in his manere
 But nathelees / his purpos held he stille
 As lordes doon / whan they wol han hir wille 581

¶ And bad this Sergeant pat he pryuely 582
 Sholde this child / softe wynde and wrappe
 With alle circumstances tendrely
 And carie it in a cofre / or in a lappe 585
 But vp on peyne / his heed of for to swappe
 That no man sholde knowe / of this entente
 Ne whennes he cam / ne whider pat he wente 588

- ¶ But at Boloigne / he to his suster deere [leaf 182]
 That thilke tyme / of Pauyk was Countesse
 He sholde it take / and shewe hire this matere
 Bisekyng hire / to doon hir bisynesse 592
 This child to fostre / in alle gentillesse
 And whos child *pat* it was / he bad hire hyde
 from euery wight^t for aught *pat* may bityde 595
- ¶ The Sergeant goth / and hath fulfild this thyng^t 596
 But to this Markys / now retourne we
 ffor now goth he / ful faste ymagynyng^t
 If by his wyues cheere / he myghte se 599
 Or by hir word *aparcyeue* / that she
 Were chaunged / but he neuere hir koude fynde
 But euere in oon / ylike sad and kynde 602
- ¶ As glad / as humble / as busy in seruyse [Latin note, p. 402]
 And eek in loue / as she was wont to be
 Was she to hym / in euery maner wise
 Ne of hir doghter / noght a word spak she 606
 Noon accident^t for noon aduersitee
 Was seyn in hire / ne neuere hir doghter name
 Ne nempned she / in ernest^t ne in game 609

¶ Explicit *tercia pars* 𐀚

¶ Incipit *pars quarta* 𐀚

- I**N this estat^t ther passed ben .4. yeer [Latin note, p. 402] 610
 Er she with childe was / but as god wolde
 A knaue child she bar / by this Walter
 fful *gracious* / and fair for to biholde 613
 And whan *pat* folk / it to his fader tolde
 Nat oonly he / but al his contre merye
 Was for this child / and god they thanke and herye 616

- ¶ Whan it was two yeer old / and fro the brest^t [leaf 182, back]
 Departed of his Norice / on a day
 This Markys / caughte yet another lest^t

To tempte his wyf / yet ofter / if he may 620
 O nedeless / was she tempted in assay
 But wedded men / ne knowe no mesure
 Whan þat they fynde / a pacient creature 623

¶ Wyf quod this Markys / ye han herd er this [*Latin note, p. 402*]
 My peple / sikly berth this mariage
 And namely / sith my sone yborn is
 Now is it worse / than euere in al oure age 627
 The murmur sleeth myn herte / and my corage
 ffor to myne eryl / comth the voys so smerte
 That it wel neigh / destroyed hath myn herte 630

¶ Now sey they thus / whan Walter is agon 631
 Thanne shal / the blood of Ianycle succede
 And been oure lord / for oother haue we noon
 Swiche wordes / seith my peple out of drede 634
 Wel oghte I / of swich murmur taken hede
 ffor certainly / I drede swich sentence
 Though they nat pleyn / speke in myn audience 637

¶ I wolde lyue in pees / if þat I myghte 638
 Wherefore / I am disposed outrelly
 As I his suster / serued by nyghte
 Right so thenke I / to serue hym priuely 641
 This warne I yow / þat ye nat sodeynly
 Out of your self / for no wo sholde outraye
 Beth pacient and ther of I yow praye 644

¶ I haue quod she seyde thus / and euere shal 645
 I wol no thyng ne nyl no thyng certeyn
 But as yow list noht greueth me at al
 Thogh that my doghter / and my sone be sleyn 648
 At youre comandement this is to seyn
 I haue nat had no part of children tweyne
 But first siknesse / and after wo and payne 651

- ¶ Ye ben oure lord / dooth with youre owene thyng^t [leaf 183]
 Right as yow list^t axeth no reed of me
 ffor as I lefte at hom / al my clothyng^t
 Whan I first cam to yow / right so quod she 655
 Lefte I my wyl / and al my libertee
 And took youre clothyng/ wherfore I yow preye
 Dooth youre plesance / I wol youre lust obeye 658
- ¶ And *certes* / if I hadde prescience [Latin note, p. 402] 659
 Your wyl to knowe / er ye youre lust me tolde
 I wolde it doon / with outen necligence
 But now I woot youre lust/ and what ye wolde 662
 Al youre plesance / ferm and stable I holde
 ffor wiste I / þat my deeth / wolde doon yow ese
 Right gladly wolde I dyen / yow to ples 665
- ¶ Deeth may nat make / no comparisoun 666
 Vn-to your love And whan this Marqys say
 The constance of hys wyf / he caste adoun
 Hise eyen two / and wondreth þat she may 669
 In pacience / suffre al this array
 And forth he goth / with drery contenance
 But to his herte / it was ful gret plesance 672
- ¶ This vggly *sergeant* in the same wyse 673
 That he hir doghter caughte / right so he
 Or worse / if men worse kan deuyse
 Hath hent hir sone / þat ful was of beautee 676
 And euere in oon / so pacient was she
 That she / no cheere made of heynesse
 But kiste hir sone / and after gan it blesse 679
- ¶ Saue this she prayde hym / þat if he myghte 680
 Hir litel sone / he wolde in erthe graue
 His tendre lymes / delicat to sighte
 ffro foweles / and fro bestes / hem to saue 683

But she noon answe're / of hym myghte haue
 He wente his wey / as hym no thyng roghte
 But to Boloigne / he tendrely it broghte 686

[T¹]his Markys wondreth / euer lenger the moore ^[¹ Rats. leaf 183, back]
 Vp on hir pacience / and if þat he
 Ne hadde soothly / knowen ther bifoore
 That parfitly / hir children loued she 690
 He wolde haue wend / þat of som subtiltee
 And of malice / or of cruel corage
 That she hadde suffred this / with sad visage 693

¶ But wel he knew / þat next hym self certayn 694
 She loued hir children best in euery wise
 But now of wommen / wolde I asken fayn
 If thise assayes / myghte nat suffise 697
 What koude a sturdy housbond / moore deuysen
 To proue hir wifhod / and hir stedfastnesse
 And he contynuyng / euere in sturdynesse 700

¶ But ther ben folk / of swich condicioñ 701
 That whan they haue / a certeyn purpos take
 They kan nat stynte / of hir entencioñ
 But right as they were bounden to that stake 704
 They wol nat of that firste purpos slake
 Right so this Markys / fulliche hath purposed
 To tempte his wyf / as he was first disposed 707

¶ He wayteth / if by word / or contenance 708
 That she to hym / was chaunged of corage
 But neuere / koude he fynde variance
 She was ay oon / in herte and in visage 711
 And ay the ferther / þat she was of age
 The moore trewe / if þat were possible
 She was to hym in loue / and moore penyble 714

¶ ffor which it semed thus / þat of hem two 715
 Ther nas but o wyl / for as Walter leste
 The same lust^t was hir plesance also
 And god be thanked / al fyl for the beste 718
 She shewed wel / for no worldly vnreste
 A wif^t as of hir self^t no thyng ne sholde
 Wille in effect^t but as hir housbond wolde 721

¶ The slaundre of Walter / ofte and wyde spradde [leaf 184]
 That of a cruel herte / he wikkedly [Latin note, p. 402]
 ffor he / a poure womman / wedded hadde
 Hath mordred / bothe his children pryuely 725
 Swich murmur / was among hem comunly
 No wonder is / for to the peples ere
 Ther cam no word / but þat they mordred were 728

¶ ffor which / wher as his peple ther bifore 729
 Hadde loued hym wel / the slaundre of his diffame
 Made hem / that they hym hated therfore
 To ben a mordrere / is an hateful name 732
 But natheles / for earnest^t ne for game
 He / of his cruel purpos nolde stente
 To tempte his wyf / was set al his entente 735

¶ Whan that this doghter /.xij. yer was of age 736
 He to the court of Rome / in subtil wise
 Enformed of his wil / sente his message
 Comaundyng hem / swiche bulles to deuyse 739
 As to his cruel purpos / may suffise
 How þat the pope / as for his peples reste
 Bad hym to wedde / another if hym leste 742

¶ I seye / he bad they sholde contrefete 743
 The popes bulles / makyng mencion
 That he hath leue / his firste wyf to lete
 As by the popes dispensacioñ 746

To stynte rancour / and dissencioñ
 Bitwix his peple and hym / thus seyde the bulle
 The which / they han publissed at the fulle 749

¶ The rude peple / as it no wonder is 750
 Wenden ful wel / þat it hadde ben right so
 But whan thise tidynges / cam to Grisildis
 I deme / that hir herte was ful wo 753
 But she / ylike sad for euere mo
 Disposed was / this humble creature
 Thaduersitee of ffortune / al tendure 756

¶ Abidyng eue / his lust and his plesance [leaf 184, back]
 To whom þat she was yeuen / herte and al
 As to hire / verray worldly suffisance
 But shortly / if this storie I tellen shal 760
 This Markys / writen hath in special
 A lettre / in which / he sheweth his entente
 And secrely / he to Boloigne it sente 763

¶ To the Erl of Pavyk' which þat hadde tho 764
 Wedded his suster / prayde he specially
 To bryngen hom agayn / his children two
 In honorable estat' al openly 767
 But o thyng' he hym prayde outrelly
 That he to no wight' th[o]gh men wolde enquere
 Sholde nat tellen / whos children þat they were 770

¶ But seye / the mayden sholde ywedded be 771
 Vn to the Markys of Saluce / anon
 And as this Erl was prayd / so dide he
 ffor at day set' he on his wey is gon 774
 Toward Saluce / and lordes many oon
 In riche array / this mayden for to gyde
 Hir yonge brother / ridyng hir bisyde 777

¶ Arrayed was / toward hir mariage 778
 This fresshe mayde / ful of gemmes clere
 Hir brother / which þat seuen yeer was of age
 Arrayed eek ful fressh in his manere 781
 And thus in gret noblesse / and with glad cheere
 Toward Saluces / shapyng hir iourney
 ffro day to day / they ryden in hir wey 784

¶ Explicit quarta pars 𐀚

¶ Incipit pars quinta / ¶ The Cler[kes Tale] [leaf 185]

A mong al this / after his wikke vsage 785
 This Markys yet his wif to tempte moore
 To the outreste preue / of hir corage
 ffully to han / experience and loore 788
 If that she were / as stedefast as bifore
 He on a day / in open audience
 fful boystously / hath seyde hire this sentence 791

¶ Certes Grisilde / I hadde ynogh plesance 792
 To han yow to my wyf / for youre goodnesse
 And for youre trouthe / and for youre obeysance
 Noght for youre lynage / ne for youre richesse 795
 But now knowe I / in verray sothfastnesse
 That in gret lordshipe / if I wel auyse
 Ther is gret seruitute / in sondry wyse 798

¶ I may nat do / as euery Plowman may 799
 My peple / me constreyneth for to take
 Another wyf / and cryen day by day
 And eek the pope / rancour for to slake 802
 Consenteth it that dar I vndertake
 And trewely / thus muche I wol yow seye
 My newe wif / is comynge by the weye 805

¶ Be strong of herte / and voyde anon hir place 806
 And thilke dowere / þat ye broghten me
 Tak it agayn / I graunte it of my grace

Retourneth / to youre fadres hous quod he 809
 No man may / alwey han prosperitee
 With euene herte / I rede yow tendure
 The strook / of ffortune / or of auenture 812

¶ And she agayn / answerde in pacience 813
 My lord quod she / I woot and wiste alway
 How þat bitwixen / youre magnificence
 And my pouerte / no wight kan ne may 816
 Maken comparisoñ / it is no nay
 I ne heeld me neuere digne / in no manere
 To be youre wyf / no : ne youre chambrere 819

And in this hous / ther ye me lady made [leaf 185, back]
 The heighe god take I / for my witnesse
 And also wisly / he my soule glade
 I neuere heeld me lady / ne maistresse 823
 But humble seruant to youre worthynesse
 And euere shal / whil þat my lyf may dure
 Abouen / euery worldly creature 826

¶ That ye so longe / of youre benygnytee 827
 Han holden me / in honour and nobleye
 Where as I was / noght worthy for to be
 That thonke I god and yow / to whom I preye 830
 fforyelde it yow / ther is namoore to seye
 Vn to my fader / gladly wol I wende
 And with hym dwelle / vn to my lyues ende 833

¶ Ther I was fostred / of a child ful smal 834
 Til I be deed / my lyf ther wol I lede
 A wydewe clene / in body / herte / and al
 ffor sith / I yaf to yow / my maydenhede 837
 And am youre trewe wyf / it is no drede
 God shilde / swich a lordes wyf to take
 Another man / to housbond / or to make 840

¶ And of youre newe wyf / god of his grace	841
So graunte yow / wele and prosperitee	
ffor I wol gladly / yelden hire my place	
In which / þat I was blisful wont to be	844
ffor sith it liketh yow / my lord quod she	
That whilom weren / al myn hertes reste	
That I shal goon / I wol goon whan yow leste	847
¶ But ther as ye / me profre swich dowaire	848
As I first broghte / it is wel in my mynde	
It were my wrecched clothes / no thyng faire	
The whiche to me / were hard now for to fynde	851
O goode god / how gentil / and how kynde	
Ye semed / by youre speche / and youre visage	
The day / that maked was oure mariage	854
¶ But sooth is seyð / algate I fynde it trewe [leaf 186]	855
ffor in effect ^t it proued is on me	
Loue is noght old / as whan þat it is newe	
But certes lord / for noon aduersitee	858
To dyen in this cas / it shal nat be	
That euere in word or werk / I shal repente	
That I yow yaf myn herte / in hool entente	861
¶ My lord ye woot ^t þat in my fadres place	862
Ye dide me strepe / out of my poure wede	
And richely / me cladden of youre grace	
To yow broghte I / noght ellis out of drede	865
But feith / and nakednesse / and maydenhede	
And here agayn / my clothyng I restore	
And eek ^t my weddyngryng ^t for euere moore	868
¶ The remenant of youre Iewels / redy be	869
In with youre chambre / dar I saufly sayn	
Naked / out of my fadres hous quod she	
I cam / and naked moot I turne agayn	872

Al youre plesance / wol I folwen fayn
 But yet I hope / it be nat youre entente
 That I smoklees / out of youre palays wente 875

¶ Ye koude nat doon / so dishoneste a thyng^t 876
 That thilke wombe / in which youre children leye
 Sholde biforn the peple / in my walkyng^t
 Be seyn al bare / wher fore I yow preye 879
 Lat me / nat lyk a worm / go by the weye
 Remembre yow / myn owene lord so deere
 I was youre wyf / thogh I vnworthy weere 882

¶ Wher fore / in gerdon of my maydenhede 883
 Which þat I broghte / and noght agayn I bere
 As voucheth sauf to yeue me to my mede
 But swich a smok^t as I was wont to were 886
 That I ther with / may wrye the wombe of here
 That was youre wyf / and here take I my leue
 Of yow myn owene lord / lest I yow greeue 889

¶ The smok quod he / that thow hast on thy bak / [of 186, bk]
 Eat it be stille / and bere it forth with thee
 But wel vnnethes / thilke word he spak^t
 But wente his wey / for routhe and for pitee 893
 Biforn the folk / hir seluen strepeth shee
 And in hir smok / with heued & feet al bare
 Toward hir fader hous / forth is she fare 896

¶ The folk hir folwen / wepyng in hir weye 897
 And ffortune / ay they cursen as they goon
 But she fro wepyng^t kepte hir eyen dreye
 Ne in this tyme / word ne spak she noon , 900
 Hir fader / that this tidynge herde anon
 Curseth the day and tyme / þat nature
 Shoope hym / to been a lyues creature 903

- ¶ ffor out of doute / this olde poure man 904
 Was euere / in suspect of hir mariage
 ffor euere he demed / sith þat it bigan
 That whan the lord / fulfild hadde his corage 907
 Hym wolde thynke / it were a disparage
 To his estat so lowe for talighte
 And voyden hire / as soone as euere he myghte 910
- ¶ Agayns his doghter / hastiliche goth he 911
 ffor he by noyse of folk / knew hir comynge
 And with hir olde cote / as it myghte be
 He couered hire / ful sorwefully wepynge 914
 But on hir body / myghte he it nat brynge
 ffor rude was the clooth / and she moore of age
 By dayes fele / than at hir mariage 917
- ¶ Thus with hir fader / for a certein space 918
 Dwelleth this flour / of wifly pacience
 That neyther / by hir wordes / ne hir face
 Biforn the folk / ne eek in hir absence 921
 Ne shewed she / þat hir was doon offence
 Ne of hir heighe estat no remembrance
 Ne hadde she / as by hir contenance 924
- ¶ No wonder is / for in hir grete estat [leaf 187] 925
 Hir goost was euere / in pleyn humylitee
 No tendre mouth / noon herte delicat
 No pompe / no semblant of realtee 928
 But ful / of pacient benygnytee
 Discreet and pridelees / ay honorable
 And to hir housbonde / euere meke & stable 931
- ¶ Men speke of Iob / and moost for his humblenesse 932
 As clerkes whan hem lest konne wel endite
 Namely of men / but as in soothfastnesse
 Thogh clerkes / preyse wommen but a lite 935

Ther kan no man / in humblesse hym acquite
 As wommen kan / ne kan be half so trewe
 As wommen been / but it be falle of newe 938

[PART VI.]

¶ ffro Boloigne / is this Erl of Pavyk come 939
 Of which the fame vp sprong^t to moore & lesse
 And to the peples erys / alle and some
 Was kouth eek/ þat a newe Markisesse 942
 He *with* hym broghte / in swich pompe & richesse
 That neuere was ther seyn / *with* mannes eye
 So noble array / in al westlumbardye 945

¶ The Markys / which þat shoope / and knew al this 946
 Er that this Erl was come / sente his message
 ffor thilke / sely / poure Grisildis
 And she with humble herte / and glad visage 949
 Nat *with* no swollen thoght^t in hir corage
 Cam at his heste / and on hir knees hir sette
 And reuerently / and wysly she hym grette 952

¶ Grisilde quod he / my wil is outrelly 953
 This mayden / þat shal wedded been to me
 Receyued be tomorwe / as really
 As it possible is / in myn hous to be 956
 And eek/ that euery wight^t in his degree
 Haue his estat^t in sittyng and seruyse
 And heigh plesance / as I kan best deuyse 959

[11] haue no wommen suffisant certayn [¹ *Rats.* lf 187, bk] 960
 The chambres for taraye / in ordynance
 After my lust^t and ther fore wolde I fayn
 That thyn were / al swich manere gouernance 963
 Thow knowest eek of old al my plesance
 Though thyn array be badde / and yuel biseye
 Do thow thy deuoir / at the leeste weye 966

¶ Nat oonly lord / that I am glad / quod she	967
To doon youre lust ^t but I desire also	
Yow for to serue / and plese in my degree	
With outen feyntynge ^t and shal euere mo	970
Ne neuere / for no wele / ne no wo	
Ne shal the goost ^t with Inne myn herte stente	
To loue yow best ^t with al my trewe entente	973
¶ And with that word / she gan the hous to dighte	974
And tables for to sette / and beddes make	
And peyned hire / to doon al that she myghte	
Preyinge the chambreres / for goddes sake	977
To hasten hem / and faste swepe and shake	
And she / the mooste seruysable of alle	
Hath euery chambre arrayed / and his halle	980
¶ Abouten vndren / gan this Erl alighte	981
That with hym broghte / thise noble children tweye	
ffor which the peple / ran to seen the sighte	
Of hire array / so richely biseye	984
And thanne at erst / amonges hem they seye	
That Walter was no fool / thogh þat hym leste	
To chaunge his wyf / for it was for his beste	987
¶ ffor she is fairer / as they demen alle	988
Than is Grisilde / and moore tendre of age	
And fairer fruyt ^t bitwene hem sholde falle	
And moore plesant ^t for hire heigh lynage	991
Hir brother eek / so fair was of visage	
That hem to seen / the peple hath caught plesance	
Commendynge now / the Markys gouernance	994
¶ O. stormy peple / vnsad / and euere vntrewe [leaf 188]	995
Ay vndiscreet ^t and chaungynge ^t as a vane	
Delitynge euere in rumbel / þat is newe	
ffor lyk the moone / ay wexe ye and wane	998

- Ay ful of clappyng^t deere ynow a Iane
 Youre doom is fals / youre constance yuele preueth
 A ful greet fool is he / that on yow leueth 1001
- ¶ Thus seyden sadde folk/ in that Citee 1002
 Whan that the peple / gazed vp and down
 ffor they were glad / right for the noueltee
 To han / a newe lady / of hir town 1005
 Namooore of this / make I now menciouen
 But to Grisilde agayn / wol I me dresse
 And telle hir constance / and hir bisynesse 1008
- ¶ fful bisy was Grisilde / in euery thyng^t 1009
 That to the feste / was apertinent^t
 Right noght was she abayst^t of hir clothyng^t
 Thogh it were rude / and somdel eek to-rent^t 1012
 But *with* glad cheere / to the yate is she went^t
With oother folk/ to greete the Markysesse
 And after that/ dooth forth hir bisynesse 1015
- ¶ With so glad cheere / his gestes she receyueth 1016
 And so konnyngly / euerich in his degree
 That no defaute / no man aparceyueth
 But ay they wondren / what she myghte be 1019
 That in so poure array / was for to se
 And koude swich honour / and reuerence
 And worthily / they preysen hir prudence 1022
- ¶ In al this mene while / she ne stente 1023
 This mayde / and eek hir brother to commende
 With al hir herte / in ful benygne entente
 So wel / þat no man koude hir prys amende 1026
 But at the laste / whan þat thise lordes wende
 To sitten down to mete / he gan to calle
 Grisilde / as she was bisy in his halle 1029

¶ Grisilde quod he / as it were in his pley [leaf 138, back]

How liketh thee my wyf / and hir beautee
Right wel quod she my lord / for in good fey
A fairer / saw I neuere noon / than she 1033

I prey to god / yeue hire prosperitee
And so hope I / þat he wol to yow sende
Plesance ynough / vn to youre lyues ende 1036

¶ O thyng^t biseke I yow / and warne also [Latin note, p. 402]

That ye ne prike / with no tormentynge
This tendre mayden / as ye han do mo
ffor she is fostred / in hir norissyng 1040

Moore tendrely / and to my supposynge
She koude nat^t aduersitee endure
As koude / a poure fostred creature 1043

¶ And whan this Walter / saw hir pacience 1044

Hir glad cheere / and no malice at al
And he so ofte / had doon to hire offence
And she ay sad / and constant as a wal 1047

Continuyng^e euere / hir Innocence ouer al
This sturdy Markys / gan his herte dresse
To rewen / vp on hir wyfly stedfastnesse 1050

¶ This is ynogh / Grisilde myn quod he 1051

Be now namoore agast^t ne yuele apayed
I haue thy feith / and thy benygnytee
As wel / as euere womman was . s^e assayed 1054

In greet estat^t and pourelliche arrayed
Now knowe I deere wyf / thy stedfastnesse
And hire in armes took / and gan hir kesse 1057

¶ And she for wonder / took of it no keepe 1058

She herde nat^t what thyng he to hir seyde
She ferde / as she hadde stirt^t out of a sleepe
Til she / out of hir mazednesse abreyde 1061

Grisilde quod he / by god þat for vs deyde
 Thow art my wyf / noon oother I haue
 Ne neuere hadde / as god my soule saue 1064

¶ This is thy doghter / which thow hast supposed [leaf 159]
 To be my wyf / that oother feithfully
 Shal be myn heir / as I haue ay supposed
 Thow bare hym / in thy body trewely 1068
 At Boloigne / haue I kept hem priuely
 Tak hem agayn / for now maistow nat seye
 That thow hast lorn / noon of thy children tweye 1071

¶ And folk / þat oother weys / han seyde of me 1072
 I warne hem wel / þat I haue doon this dede
 ffor no malice / ne for no crueltee
 But for tassaye in thee / thy wommanhede 1075
 And nat to sleen my children / god forbede
 But for to kepe hem / pryuely and stille
 Til I thy purpos knewe / and al thy wille 1078

¶ Whan she this herde / / aswowne doun she falleth 1079
 ffor pitous ioye / and after hir swownynge
 She bothe hir yonge children / vn to hire calleth
 And in hir armes / pitously wepynge 1082
 Embraceth hem / and tendrely kissynge
 fful lyk a moder / with hir salte terys
 She batheth / bothe hir visage and hir herys 1085

¶ O which a pitous thyng it was to se 1086
 Hir swownyng and hir humble voys to heere
 Grant mercy lord / god thanke it yow / quod she
 That ye han saued me / my children deere 1089
 Now rekke I neuere / to been ded right heere
 Sith I stonde in youre loue / and in youre grace
 No fors of deeth / ne whan my spirit pace 1092

- ¶ O tendre / o deere / o yonge children myne 1093
 Youre woful moder / wende stedefastly
 That cruel houndes / or som foul *vermyne*
 Hadde eten yow / but god of his mercy 1096
 And youre benygne fader / tendrely
 Hath doon yow kept and in that same stounde
 Al sodeynly / she swapte adoun to grounde 1099
- ¶ And in hir swogh / so sadly holdeth she [leaf 189, back]
 Hir children two / whan she gan hem tembrace
 That with greet sleghte / and greet difficultee
 The children from hir arm / they gonne arace 1103
 O. many a teer / o many a pitous face
 Doun ran / of hem þat stoden hir bisyde
 Vnnethe aboute hire / myghte they abyde 1106
- ¶ Walter hir gladeth / and hir sorwe slaketh 1107
 She riseth vp abaysed / from hir traunce
 And euery wight hir ioye and feste maketh
 Til she / hath caught agayn hir contenañce 1110
 Walter hir dooth / so feithfully plesañce
 That it was deyntee / for to seen the cheere
 Bitwix hem two / now they ben met yfeere 1113
- ¶ Thise ladies / whan þat they / hir tyme say 1114
 Han taken hire / and in to chambre goon
 And strepen hire / out of hir rude aray
 And in a clooth of gold / þat brighte shoon 1117
 With a coroune / of many a riche stoon
 Vp on hir hed / they in to halle hir broghte
 And ther she was / honored as hir oghte 1120
- ¶ Thus hath this pitous day / a blisful ende 1121
 ffor euery man and womman / dooth his myght
 This day / in murthe and reuel to dispende
 Til on the welkne / shoon the sterres lyght 1124

- ffor moore solempne / in euery mannes syght
 This feste was / and gretter of costage
 Than was / the reuel of hir mariage 1127
- ¶ fful many a yeer / in heigh prosperitee 1128
 Lyuen thise two / in concord and in reste
 And richely / his doghter married he
 Vn to a lord / oon of the worthyeste 1131
 Of al Ytaille / and thanne in pees and reste
 His wyues fader / and his court he kepeth
 Til that the soule / out of his body crepeth 1134
- ¶ His sone / succedeth in his heritage [leaf 190] 1135
 In reste and pees / after his fader day
 And fortunat^t was eek his mariage
 Al putte he nat his wyf^t in gret assay 1138
 This world is nat so strong^t it is no nay
 As it hath been / in olde tymes yore
 And herkneth / what this Auctour seith therefore 1141
- ¶ This storie is seyde / nat for þat wyues sholde [Latin note, p. 402]
 ffolwen Grisilde / as in humylitee
 ffor it were importable / thogh they wolde
 But for þat euery wight^t in his degree 1145
 Sholde be constant^t in aduersitee
 As was Grisilde / therfore Petrak writeth
 This storie / which he with heigh stile enditeth / 1148
- ¶ ffor sith a womman / was so pacient^t 1149
 Vn to a mortal man / wel moore vs oghte
 Receyuen al in gree / that god vs sent
 ffor gret skile is / he preue that he wroghte 1152
 But he ne tempteth / no man þat he boghte
 As seith Seint Iame / if ye his pistel rede
 He preueth folk al day / it is no drede 1155

¶ And suffreth vs / as for oure exercise 1156
 With sharpe scourges / of aduersitee
 fful ofte to be bete / in sondry wise
 Nat for to knowe oure wyl / for *certes* he 1159
 Er we were born / knew al oure freletee
 And for oure beste / is al his gouernance
 Let vs thanne lyue / in *vertuous* suffrance 1162

¶ But o word lordynges / herkneth er I go 1163
 It were ful hard / to fynde now a dayes
 In al a town / Grisildis thre or two
 ffor if þat they were put to swiche assayes 1166
 The gold of hem / hath now so badde alayes
 With bras / that thogh the coigne / be fair at eye
 It wolde rather / breste atwo than plye 1169

¶ ffor which heere / for the wyues loue of Bathe [leaf 190, back]
 Whos lyf / and al hir secte / god mayntene
 In heigh maistrie / or ellis were it scathe
 I wol with lusty herte / fressh and grene 1173
 Seye yow a song to glade yow I wene
 And lat vs stynte / of earnestful matere
 Herkneth my song that seith in this manere 1176

¶ Here is ended the tale / of the clerk of Oxenford 𐝱

¶ Lenuoy de Chaucer 𐝱

G Risilde is deed / and eek hir pacience
 And bothe atones / buried in Ytaille
 ffor which I crye / in open audience 1179
 No wedded man / so hardy be tasssaille
 His wyues pacience / in trust to fynde
 Grisildis / for in *certein* he shal faille 1182

- ¶ O noble wyues / ful of heigh prudence
 Lat noon humilitee / youre tonge nayle
 Ne lat no clerk / haue cause or diligence 1185
 To write of yow / a storie of swich meruaile
 As of Grisildis / pacient and kynde
 Lest Chichyuache / yow swelwe in hir entrayle 1188
- ¶ ffolweth Ekko / that holdeth no silence
 But euere answereth / at the countretaille
 Beth nat bidaffed / for youre Innocence 1191
 But sharply / tak on yow the gouernaile
 Emprynteth wel / this lessō in youre mynde
 ffor commune profit/ sith it may auaile 1194
- ¶ Ye Archewyues / stondeth at defense [leaf 191]
 Syn ye be strong^t as is a gret Camaile
 Ne suffreth nat^t þat men yow doon offense 1197
 And sklendre wyues / fieble as in bataile
 Beth egre / as is a tigre yond in Ynde
 Ay clappeth as a Mille / I yow consaile 1200
- ¶ Ne dreded hem nat^t dooth hem no reuerence
 ffor thogh thyn housbond / armed be in maile
 The arwes / of thy crabbed eloquence 1203
 Shal perce his brest^t and eek his auentaile
 In Ialousie / I rede eek thow hym bynde
 And thow shalt make hym couche / as dooth a Quaile
- ¶ If thow be fair / ther folk ben in presence
 Shewe thow thy visage / and thyn aparaile
 If thow be foul / be fre of thy dispence 1209
 To gete thee freendes / ay do thy trauaile
 Be ay of cheere / as light^t as leef on lynde
 And lat hym care and wepe / and wrynge & wayle 1212

¶ Explicit 𐀚

APPENDIX TO GROUP E, § 2.

[? *Original, but rejected, End-Link to the Clerk's Tale, perhaps following l. 1162, with which the paraphrase of Petrarch's Latin ends, or l. 1169.*]

¶ **T**his worthy Clerk^t whan ended was his tale [on leaf 191]
 Oure hoost seyde / and swoor by goddes bones
 Me were leuere / than a barel ale
 My wyf at hom / had herd this legende ones 4
 This is / a gentil tale for the nones
 As to my purpos / wiste ye my wille
 But thyng that wol nat be / lat it be stille 7

GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

§ 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

HENGWRT MS.

¶ Here bigynneth / the Phisiciens tale. [leaf 191, back]

THer was / as telleth Titus Liuius
 A knyght/ that called was Virginius
 ffulfild of honour / and of worthynesse
 And strong of freendes / and of greet richesse 4
 ¶ This knyght a doghter hadde by his wif
 Ne children hadde he mo / in al his lif
 ffair was this mayde / in excellent beautee
 Abouen euery wight pat man may see 8
 ffor Nature hath / with souereyn diligence
 Yformed hire / in so greet excellence
 As thogh she wolde seyn / lo I nature
 Thus kan I forme / and peynte a creature 12
 Whan pat me list who kan me countrefete
 Pigmalion noght thogh he ay forge and bete ¶ quere in Metha-
 Or graue / or peynte / for I dar wel seyn morphosios.
 Apelles Zanzis / sholde werche in veyn
 Outher to graue / or peynte / or forge / or bete
 If they presumeden / me to countrefete
 ffor he that is / the formere principal
 Hath maked me / his vicaire general 20
 To forme and peynten / erthely creaturis
 Right as me list and ech thyng in my cure is
 Vnder the Moone / that may wane and waxe
 And for my werk right no thyng wol I axe 24

¶ Apelles fecit
 mirabile opus in
 tumulodarij. Vi-
 de in Alexandri
 libro. 1.º de zanze
 in libro Tullij.

My lord and I / been ful of oon acord
 I made hire / to the worshiþe of my lord
 So do I / alle myne othere creatures
 What colour þat they han / or what figures 28
 Thus semeth me / that nature wolde seye
 This mayde of age / xij. yeer was and tweye
 In which þat nature / hadde swich delit
 ffor / right as she kan peynte a lilye whit 32
 And reed a Rose / right with swich peynture
 She peynted hath / this noble creature
 Er she were born / vp-on hir lymes free
 Wher as by right swiche colours sholden be 36
 And Phebus / dyed hath hir tresses grete [leaf 192]
 Lyk to the stremys / of his burned hete
 And if þat excellent was hir beautee
 A thousand fold / moore vertuous was she 40
 In hire / ne lakked no condiciõ
 That is to preyse / as by discreciõ
 As wel in goost as body / chaast was she
 ffor which / she floured in virginitee 44
 With aȝ humilitee / and abstinence
 With aȝ atemperance / and pacience
 With mesure eek / of beryng and array
 Discreet she was / in answeyng alway 48
 Thogh she were wise Pallas / dar I seyn
 Hir facound eek / ful wommanly and pleyn
 No countrefeted termes / hadde she
 To seme wys / but after hir degree 52
 She spak / and alle hir wordes / moore and lesse
 Sownyng in vertu / and in gentillesse
 Shamefast she was / in maydens shamefastnesse
 Constant in herte / and euere in bisynesse 56
 To dryue hire out of ydel slogardye
 Bacus hadde of hir mouth / right no maistrye
 ffor wyn and youthe / dooth Venus encresse
 As men in fyr / wil casten oille / or gresse 60

And of hir owene vertu / vnconstreyned
 She hath ful ofte tyme / syk hir feyned
 ffor þat she wolde / fleen the compaignye
 Where likly was / to treten of folye 64
 As is at festes / renels / and at daunces
 That been occasions / of daliaunces
 Swich thyng^t maken children for to be
 To soone rype / and boold / as men may se 68
 Which is ful perilous / and hath be yoore
 ffor al to soone / may they lerne loore
 Of boldnesse / whan she woxe is a wyf/
 ¶ And ye Maistresses / in youre olde lyf 72
 That lordes doghtres / han in gouernance
 Ne taketh of my wordes / no displesance
 Thenketh / þat ye been set^t in gouernynges
 Of lordes doghtres / oonly for two thynges 76
 ¶ Owther / for ye han kept^t youre honestee [leaf 192, back]
 Or ellis / ye han falle in freletee
 And knowen wel ynow / the olde daunce
 And han forsaken fully / swich meschaunce 80
 ffor euere mo / therfore / for Cristes sake
 To teche hem vertu / looke þat ye ne slake
 ¶ A theef of venyson / that hath forlaft^t
 His likerousnesse / and al his olde craft^t 84
 Kan kepe a fforest^t best of any man
 Now kepeth wel / for if ye wole ye kan
 Looke wel þat ye / vn-to no vice assente
 Lest ye be dampned / for youre wikke entente 88
 ffor who so dooth / a traytour is certeyn
 And taketh kepe / of that^t þat I shal seyn
 Of alle treson / souerayn pestilence ¶ *nota*
 Is / whan a wight^t bitrayseth Innocence 92
 ¶ Ye fadres / and ye modres eek also
 Thogh ye han children / be it oon or mo
 Yourre is the charge / of al hir surueaunce
 Whil þat they been / vnder youre gouernaunce 96

Beth war / if by ensample of youre lyuyng
 Or by youre necligence / in chastisyng
 That they perisse / for I dar wel seye
 If þat they doon / ye shul it deere abeye 100
 Vnder a Shepherde / softe and necligent
 The wolf hath many a sheepe / and lomb to-rent
 Suffiseth oon ensample / now as heere
 ffor I moot turne agayn to my matere 104
 ¶ This mayde of which / I wol this tale expresse
 So kepte hir self hir neded no maistresse
 ffor in hir lyuyng maydens myghten rede
 As in a book euery good word / or dede 108
 That longeth / to a mayden vertuous
 She was so prudent and so bounteous
 ffor which the fame out sproong on euery syde
 Bothe of hir beautee / and hir bountee / wyde 112
 That thurgh that land / they preysed hire echone
 That loued vertu / saue enuye allone
 That sory is / of oother mennes wele ¶ Augustinus.
 And glad is / of his sorwe / and his vnheele 116
 The doctor / maketh this discripcioun [leaf 193]
 This mayde / vp-on a day / wente in the toun
 Toward a temple / with hir moder deere
 As is / of yonge maydens the manere 120
 ¶ Now was ther thanne / a Iustice in that toun
 That gouernour was / of that Regioun
 And so bifel / this Iuge hise eyen caste
 Vp-on this mayde / auysynge hym ful faste 124
 As she cam forby / ther as this Iuge stood
 Anoon his herte chaunged / and his mood
 So was he caught with beautee of this mayde
 And to hym self / ful pryuely he sayde 128
 This mayde shal be myn / for any man
 Anon the feend / in-to his herte ran
 And taughte hym sodeynly / þat he by slyghte
 This mayden / to his purpos wyne myghte 132

ffor *certes* / by no force / ne by no meede
 Hym thoughte / he was nat able for to speede
 ffor she was strong of freendes / and eek she
 Confermed was / in swich souerayn bountee 136
 That wel he wiste / he myghte hir neuere wynne
 As for to make hire / with hir body synne
 ffor which / by greet deliberacioun
 He sente after a cherl / was in the town 140
 Which þat he knew / for subtil and for bold
 This Iuge vn-to this cherl / his tale hath told
 In secree wise / and made hym to ensure
 He sholde telle it to no creature 144
 And if he dide / he sholde lese his heed
 Whan þat assented was / this cursed reed
 Glad was this Iuge / and maked hym gret cheere
 And yaf hym yiftes / *precieuse* and deere 148
 ¶ Whan shapen was / al hir conspiracie
 ffor point to point how þat his lecherie
 Parfourned sholde been / ful subtilly
 As ye shul heere it after openly 152
 ¶ Hom goth the cherl / that highte Claudius
 This false Iuge / that highte Apius
 So was his name / for this is no fable
 But knowen / for historial thyng notable 156
 The sentence of it sooth is out of doute [leaf 193, back]
 This false Iuge / gooth now faste aboute
 To hasten his delit al that he may
 And so bifel / soone after on a day 160
 This false Iuge / as telleth vs the storie
 As he was wont sat in his Consistorie
 And yaf his domes / vp-on sondry eas
 ¶ This false cherl cam forth / a ful gret pas 164
 And seyde / lord if þat it be youre wille
 As dooth me right vp-on this pitous bille
 In which / I pleyne vp-on Virginius
 And if þat he wol seyn / it is nat thus 168

I wol it preue / and fynde good witesse
 That sooth is / that my bille wol expresse
 ¶ This Iuge answerde / of this in his absence
 I may nat yeue / diffynytyf sentence 172
 Lat do hym calle / and I wol gladly heere^{andire}
 Thow shalt haue al right^{hic} and no wrong heere
 Virginius cam to wite / the Iuges wille
 And right anon / was rad this cursed bille 176
 The sentence of it^t was as ye shul heere
 ¶ To yow my lord / sire Apius so deere
 Sheweth / youre poure seruant Claudius
 How þat a knyght^t called Virginius 180
 Agayns the lawe / agayn al equitee
 Holdeth expres / agayn the wyl of me
 My seruant^t which þat is my thral by right^t
 Which fro myn hous / was stole vp-on a nyght^t 184
 Whil that she was ful yong^t this wol I preue
 By witesse lord / so þat it nat yow greue
 She nys his doghter nat^t what so he seye
 Wher to yow / my lord the Iuge I preye 188
 Yeld me my thral / if þat it be youre wille
 Lo / this was al the sentence / of his bille
 ¶ Virginius / gan vp-on the cherl biholde
 But hastily / er he his tale tolde 192
 And wolde haue proued it^t as sholde a knyght^t
 And eek^t by witnessynge / of many a wight^t
 That it was fals / that seyde his Aduersarie
 This cursed Iuge / wolde no thyng tarie 196
 Ne here a word / moore of Virginius [leaf 194]
 But yaf his Iuggement^t and seyde thus /
 ¶ I deme anon / this cherl / his seruant haue
 Thou shalt no lenger / in thyn hous hir saue 200
 Go bryng hir forth / and put hire in oure warde
 The cherl shal han his thral / this I awarde
 ¶ And whan / this worthy knyght Virginius
 Thurgh sentence / of this Iustice Apius 204


Moste by force / his deere doghter yeuen
 Vn-to the Iuge / in lecherie to lyuen
 He goth hym hom / and sette hym in his halle
 And leet' anoon / his deere doghter calle 208
 And with a face deed / as asshen colde
 Vp-on hir humble face / he gan biholde
 With fadres pitee / stikyng thurgh his herte
 Al wolde he / from his purpos nat conuerte 212
 ¶ Doghter quod he / Virginia by thy name
 Ther been two weyes / outhere deeth / or shame
 That thou most suffre / allas þat I was bore
 ffor neuere / thou deseruedest' wherfore 216
 To dyen / with a swerd / or with a knyf
 O deere doghter / endere of my lyf
 Which I haue fostred vp / with swich plesance
 That thou were neuere / out of my remembrance 220
 O doghter / which that art my laste wo
 And in my lyf my laste ioye also
 O gemme of chastitee / in pacience
 Tak thou thy deeth / for this is my sentence 224
 ffor loue / and nat for hate / thou most be deed
 My pitous hand / moot smyten of thyn heed
 Allas / þat euere Apius thee say
 Thus hath he falsly / Iugged thee to day 228
 And tolde hire al the cas / as ye bifore
 Han herd / nat nedeth for to telle it moore
 ¶ O mercy deere fader / quod this mayde
 And with that word / she bothe hir armes layde 232
 Aboute his nekke / as she was wont to do
 The teeris borste / out of hir eyen two
 And seyde / goode fader / shal I dye
 Is ther no grace / is ther no remedye 236
 ¶ No certes / deere doghter myn quod he [leaf 191, back]
 ¶ Thanne yif me leyser / fader myn quod she
 My deeth for to compleyne / a litel space 239
 ffor pardee Iepte / yaf his doghter grace ¶ Iudicium cap.º xj.º

fuit illo tempore
 lepte Galaundes .

ffor to compleyne / er he hir slowe allas
 And god it woot no thyng was hir trespass
 But for she ran / hir fader for to se
 To welcome hym / with greet solempnytee 244
 And with that word / she fil aswowne anon
 And after / whan hir swownyng is agon
 She riseth vp / and to hir fader sayde
 Blessed be god / þat I shal dye a mayde 248
 Yif me my deeth / er þat I haue a shame
 Dooth with youre child / youre wyl a goddes name
 And with that word / she preyed hym ful ofte
 That with his swerd / he wolde smyte softe 252
 And with that word / aswowne doun she fil
 ¶ Hir fader / with ful sorweful herte and wil
 Hir heed of smoot and by the tope it hente
 And to the Iuge / he gan it to presente 256
 As he sat yet in doom / in Consistorie
 ¶ And whan the Iuge it saw / as seith the storie
 He bad to take hym / and anchange hym faste
 But right anon / a thousand peple In thraste 260
 To saue the knyght for routhe and for pitee
 ffor knowen was / the false Iniquitee
 ¶ The peple anon / hadde suspect in this thyng
 By manere / of the cherles chalangyng 264
 That it was / by the assent of Apius
 They wisten wel / þat he was lecherus
 ffor which / vn-to this Apius they gon
 And caste hym in a prison / right anon 268
 Ther as he slow hym self / and Claudius
 That seruant was / vn-to this Apius
 Was demed / for to hange vp on a tree
 But that Virginus / of his pitee 272
 So preyde for hym / that he was exiled
 And ellis certes / he hadde been bigyled
 The remenant were ananged / moore and lesse
 That were consentant of this cursednesse 276

¶ Heere may men seen / how synne hath his merite [leaf 195]
 Beth war / for no man woot whom god wol smyte
 In no degree / ne in which manere wise
 The worm of conscience / may agrise 280
 Of wikked lyf / thogh it so pryuee be
 That no man woot ther of / but god and he
 ffor be he lewed man / or ellis lered
 He-noot how soone / that he shal been afered 284
 Ther-fore I rede yow / this conseil take
 fforsaketh synne / er synne yow forsake

¶ Here endeth the Phisiciens tale 𐀀

¶ The myry talkyng^t of the Hoost^t to the Phisicien 
and the Pardon^r

Oure Hoost gan to swere / as he were wood
Harrow quod he / by nayles and by blood 288

This was a fals cherl / and a fals Iustise
As shameful deeth / as herte may deuyse
Come to thise Iuges / and hir Aduocatz
Algate this sely made / is slayn allas 292

Allas / to deere boghte she beautee
Wherfore I seye alday / þat men may se
That yiftes of ffortune / and of nature
Been cause of deeth / to many a creature 296

[.
. *no gap in the MS.*]

Of bothe yiftes / þat I speke of now
Men han ful ofte / moore for harm than prow 300

¶ But trewely / myn owene maister deere
This is a pitous tale / for to heere
But nathelees passe ouer / is no fors
I pray to god / so saue thy gentil cors 304

And eek thyne vrynals / and thy Iurdones
Thyn Ypocras / and eek thy galyones
And euery boyste / ful of thy letuarie
God blesse hem / and oure lady Seinte Marie 308

So mote I then / thow art a propre man
And lyk a prelat / by Seint Ronyan
Seyde I nat wel / I kan nat^t speke in terme [leaf 105, back]
But wel I woot^t thow doost myn herte to erme 312

That I almoost^t haue caught^t a Cardynacle
By corpus bones / but if I haue triacle
Or ellis a draghte / of moyste and corny ale
Or but I heere anon / a murye tale 316

Myn herte is lost for pitee of this mayde

¶ Thow beel amy / thow Pardoner he sayde

Tel vs som myrthe / or Iapes right anon

¶ It shal be doon quod he / by Seint Ronyon 320

But first quod he / heere at this ale stake

I wol bothe drynke / and eten of a Cake

¶ And right anon / thise gentils gonne to crye

Nay lat hym telle vs / of no ribawdye 324

Tel vs som moral thyng / þat we may leere

Som wit / and thanne wol we gladly heere

¶ I graunte ywis quod he / but I moot thynke

Vpon som honeste thyng whil þat I drynke 328

¶ *Radix omnium malorum / est Cupiditas // Ad*
Thimotheum . 6°. 𐀓

¶ Here bigynneth the Prologe of the Pardoners tale 𐀓

L Ordynge quod he / in chirches whan I preche
 I peyne me / to han an hauteyn speche
 And ryng it out as round as gooth a belle
 ffor I kan / al by rote that I telle 332

My theme is alwey oon / and euere was
Radix malorum / est cupiditas
 ¶ first I pronounce / whennes þat I come
 And thanne my bulles / shewe I alle & some 336
 Oure lige lordes seel / on my patente
 That shewe I first my body to warente
 That no man be so boold / ne preest ne clerk
 Me to destourbe / of Cristes holy werk 340

And after that thanne telle I forth my tales
 Bulles of Popes / and of Cardynales
 Of Patriarks / and Bisshopes I shewe [leaf 106]
 And in latyn / I speke a wordes fewe 344
 To saffron with / my predicaciō

And for to stire hem / to deuociō
 ¶ Thanne shewe I forth / my longe cristal stones
 Ycrammed ful / of cloutes and of bones 348
 Relikes been they / as wenen they echon
 Thanne haue I in a latoñ / a shulder bon
 Which þat was / of an holy Iewes sheepe
 Goode men I seye / tak of my wordes keepe 352

If þat this boon be wasshe / in any welle
 If cow / or calf or sheepe / or Oxe swelle
 That any worm hath ete / or worm ystonge
 Taak water of that welle / and wasshe his tonge 356

And it is hool anoon / and forther moor
 Of pokkes / and of Scabbe / and euery soor
 Shal euery sheepe be hool / þat of this welle
 Drynketh a draughte / taak kepe eek what I telle 360
 ¶ If þat the goode man / þat the bestes oweth
 Wol euery wike / er þat the cok hym croweth
 ffastyng / drynken of this welle a draghte
 As thilke holy Iew / oure eldres taghte 364
 Hise bestes and his stoor / shal multiplie
 And sire also / it heeleth Ialousie
 ffor thogh a man / be falle in Ialous rage
 Lat maken with this water / his potage 368
 And neuere shal he moore / his wyf mystriste
 Thogh he the soothe / of hir defaute wiste
 Al hadde she / taken preestes / two or thre
 ¶ Heere is a Miteyn eek / þat ye may se 372
 He þat his hand / wol putte / in this Mitayn
 He shal haue / multiplyng of his grayn
 Whan he hath sown / be it whete or Otes
 So þat / he / offre pens / or ellis grotes 376
 ¶ Goode men and wommen / o thyng warne I yow
 If any wight be in this chirche now
 That hath doon synne horrible / that he
 Dar nat for shame / of it yshryuen be 380
 Or any womman / be she yong or old
 That hath ymaked / hir housbond Cokewold
 Swich folk / shal haue no power / ne no grace [leaf 196, back]
 To offren to my Relikes / in this place 384
 And who so fyndeth hym / out of swich blame
 He wol come vp / and offre a goddes name
 And I assoille hym / by the auctoritee
 Which þat by bulle / ygraunted was to me 388
 ¶ By this gaude / have I wonne / yeer by yeer
 An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner
 I stonde lyk a Clerk / in my pulpet
 And whan that lewed peple / is down yset 392

I preche so / as ye han herd bifore
 And telle / an hundred false lapes more
 Thanne peyne I me / to strecche forth the nekke
 And Est and west^t vp-on the peple I bekke 396
 As dooth a dowue / sittying on a berne
 Myne handes / and my tonge goon so yerne
 That it is ioye / to se my bisynesse
 Of Auarice / and of swich cursednesse 400
 Is al my prechyng^t for to make hem free
 To yeuen hir pens / and namely vn-to me
 ffor myn entente is nat^t but for to wynne
 And no thyng^t for correccioun of synne 404
 I rekke neuere / whan þat they been beryed
 Thogh þat hir soules / goon a blakeberyed
 ffor certes / many a predicaciō
 Comth ofte tyme / of yuel entenciō 408
 ¶ Som for plesance of folk^t and flaterye
 To been auanced / by ypocrisie
 And som for veyne glorie / and som for hate
 ffor whan I dar / noon oother weyes debate 412
 Thanne wol I styng^e hym / with my tonge smerte
 In prechyng^t so þat he shal nat asterte
 To been diffamed falsly / if þat he
 Hath trespassed / to my bretheren / or to me 416
 ffor though I telle noght^t his propre name
 Men shal wel knowe / that it is the same
 By signes / and by othere circumstances
 Thus quyte I folk^t that doon vs displesances 420
 Thus spete I out^t my venym vnder hewe
 Of holynesse / to seme holy and trewe
 But shortly / myn entente I wol deuyse [leaf 197]
 I preche of no thyng^t but for coueitise 424
 Ther-fore my theme is yet^t and euere was
 Radix malorum / est Cupiditas
 ¶ Thus kan I preche / agayn that same vice
 Which þat I vse / and that is Auarice 428

But though my self^e be gilty in that synne
 Yet kan I make / oother folk to twynne
 ffrom Auarice / and soore to repente
 But that is nat^e my principal entente 432
 I preche no thyng^e but for coueitise
 Of this matere / it oghte ynow suffise
 ¶ Thanne telle I hem / ensamples many oon
 Of olde stories / longe tyme agoon 436
 ffor lewed peple / louen tales olde
 Swiche thynges / kan they wel reporte & holde
 What trowe ye / þat whiles I may preche
 And wynne / gold and siluer / for I teche 440
 That I wol lyue in pouerte / wilfully
 Nay nay / I thoghte it neuere trewely
 ffor I wol preche / and begge / in sondry landes
 I wol nat do no labour / with myne handes 444
 Ne make baskettes / and lyue ther by
 By cause / I wol nat beggen ydelly
 I wol / none of the Apostles countrefete
 I wol haue moneye / wolles / chese / and whete 448
 Al were it yeuen / of the pouerest page
 Or of the pouereste widwe / in a Village
 Al sholde hir children / sterue for famyne
 Nay I wol drynke / licour of the vyne 452
 And haue a ioly wenche / in euery toun
 But herkneth lordynges / in conclusioun
 Youre likyng is / þat I shal telle a tale
 Now haue I dronke / a draghte of corny Ale 456
 By god I hope / I shal yow telle a thyng^e
 That shal by reson / been at youre likyng^e
 ffor thogh my self be / a ful vicious man
 A moral tale / yet I yow telle kan 460
 Which I am wont to preche / for to wynne
 Now holde youre pees / my tale I wol bigynne

[H]ere bigynneth / the Pardoners tale 𐀚

IN flandres / whilom was a compaignye [leaf 197, back]
 Of yonge folk^t that haunteden folye 464
 As Riot^t hasard / Stewes / and Tauernes
 Where as with harpes / lutes / and gyternes
 They daunce / and pleyen at dees / bothe day & nyght^t
 And ete also and drynke / ouer hir myght^t 468
 Thurgh which / they doon the deucl sacrifice
 With-Inne that deucl temple / in cursed wise
 By superfluytee / abhomynable
 Hir othes been so grete / and so dampnable 472
 That it is grisly / for to heere hem swere
 Oure blissed lordes body / they to-tere
 Hem thoughte / that Iewes / rente hym noght ynough^t
 And eech of hem / at otheres synne lough^t 476
 And right anon / thanne coomen Tombesteres
 ffetys and smale / and yonge ffrutesteres
 Syngeris with harpes / Baudes / waufereres
 Whiche been / the verray deucl Officers 480
 To kyndle and blowe / the fyr of lecherye
 That is annexed / vn-to glotonye
 The holy writ take I / to my witnesse
 That luxure / is in wyn / and dronkenesse
 ¶ Lo how þat dronken loth / vnkyndely
 Lay by his doghtres two / vnwityngly
 So dronke he was / he nyste what he wroghte
 Herodes / who so wel the stories soghte 488
 [.
 *no spurious lines in this MS.*]

¶ Nolite inebriari
vino in quo est
luxuria

Whan he of wyn was replet ^t at his feste	489
Right at his owene table / he yaf his heste	
To sleen the Baptist ^t Iohn / ful giltelees	
Senec ^t seith a good word doutelees	492
¶ He seith / he kan no difference fynde	¶ <i>Nota</i>
Bitwix a man / that is out of his mynde	
And a man / which <i>pat</i> is dronkelewe	
But that woodnesse / yfallen in a sherewe	496
Perseuereth lenger / than dooth dronkenesse	
O glotonye / ful of cursednesse	
O cause first ^t of oure confusioñ	
O original / of oure dampnacioñ	500
Til Crist hadde boght vs / with his blood agayn	
Lo how deere / shortly for to sayn	
Aboght was / thilke cursed vileynye	[leaf 198]
Corupt ^t was al this world for glotonye	504
Adam oure fader / and his wyf also	
ffro Paradys / to labour and to wo	
Were dryuen for that vice / it is no drede	
ffor whil <i>pat</i> Adam fasted / as I rede	508
He was in Paradys / and whan <i>pat</i> he	// <i>Ieronimus contra Iovinianum</i> // <i>Quomdiu Ieiunau[is Adam] in paradiso fuit / comedit & eiectus est. sta[tim] duxit vxorem.</i>
Eet of the frut ^t defended on a tree	
Anon he was out cast ^t to wo and peyne	
O glotonye / on thee wel oghte vs pleyne	512
¶ O wiste a man / how manye maladies	
ffolwen of excesse / and of glotonyes	
He wolde been / the moore mesurable	
Of his diete / sitting at his table	516
Allas the shorte throte / the tendre mouth	
Maketh / <i>pat</i> Est ^t and West ^t and North and South	
In erthe / in Eyr / in Water / men to swynke	
To gete a gloton / deyntee mete and drynke	520
Of this matere / o Paul / wel kanstow trete	
Mete vn-to wombe / and wombe eek vn-to mete	// <i>esca ventri et venter escis deus autem & hunc & illam destruet</i>
Shal god destroyen bothe / as Paulus seith	
Allas a foul thyng ^t is it by my feith	

To seye this word / and fouler is the dede 525
 Whan man so drynketh / of the white & rede
 That of his throte / he maketh his pryuee
 Thurgh / thilke cursed superfluite 528
 ¶ The Apostle wepyng^t seith ful pitously // Ad Philipenses
capitulo 3^o.
 Ther walken manye / of whiche yow toold haue I
 I seye it now wepyng^t with pitous voys
 Ther been enemys / of Cristes croys 532
 Of whiche the ende is deth / wombe is hir god
 O wombe / o bely / o styntyng cod
 ffulfilled of dong^t and of corrupcioun
 At either ende of thee / foul is the soun 536
 How greet labour / and cost^t is thee to fynde
 Thise Cokes / how they stampe / & streyne / & grynde
 And turnen substance / in-to accident^t
 To fulfillen al / the likerous talent^t 540
 Out of the harde bones / knocke they
 The mary / for they caste nat away
 That may go thurgh the golet^t softe and soote [leaf 198, back]
 Of Spicerie / of lief / and bark / and roote 544
 Shal been his Sauce / ymaked by delit
 To make hym yet^t a newer appetit^t
 But *certes* / he that haunteth swiche delices ¶ qui autem in delicijs
est viuens / mortuus
est /
 Is deed / whil þat he lyueth in tho vices
 ¶ A lecherous thyng is wyn // and dronkenesse ¶ luxuriosa res /
vinum
 Is ful of stryuyng^t and of wrecchednesse ¶ et contumeliosa ebrietas
 O dronke man / disfigured is thy face
 Sour is thy breeth / foul artow to embrace 552
 And thurgh thy dronke nose / semeth the soun
 As thogh thou seydest ay / Sampson Sampson
 And yet god woot^t Sampson drank neuere no wyn
 Thou fallest^t as it were a stiked swyn 556
 Thy tonge is lost^t and al thyn honest cure
 ffor dronkenesse / is verray sepulture
 Of mannes wit^t and his discrecioñ
 In whom þat drynke / hath domynacioñ 560

He kan no conseil kepe / it is no drede
 Now kepe yow / fro the white and fro the rede
 And namely / fro the white wyn of lepe
 That is to selle / in fflisslístrete / or in Chepe 564
 This wyn of Spaigne / crepeth subtilly
 In othere wyne / growynge faste by
 Of which / ther riseth swich fumositee
 That whan a man / hath dronken draghtes thre 568
 And weneth þat he be / at hom in Chepe
 He is in Spaigne / right at the toun of lepe
 Nat at the Rochel / ne at Burdeux toun
 And thanne wol he seyn / Sampson Sampson 572
 ¶ But herkneth lordynges / o word I yow preye
 That alle the souereyn actes / dar I seye
 Of victories / in the olde testament
 Thurgh verray god / that is omnipotent 576
 Were doon in abstinence / and in prayere
 Looketh the Bible / and ther ye may it leere
 ¶ Looke Attila / the grete conquerour
 Deyde in his sleepe / with shame and dishonour 580
 Bledying at his nose / in dronkenesse
 A Capitayn / sholde lyue in sobrenesse
 ¶ And ouer al this / auyseth yow right wel [leaf 199]
 What was comaunded / vn-to Lamwel ¶ *Noli vinum dare &c.* 584
 Nat Samuel / but Lamwel seye I
 Redeth the Bible / and fynd it expresly
 Of wyn yeuyng / to hem þat han Iustise
 Namore of this / for it may wel suffise 588
 ¶ And now / that I haue spoken of glotonye
 Now wol I / yow defende hasardrye
 Hasard / is verray moder of lesynges ¶ *Policratici libro 1º. Mendaciorum & peruiurium mater est Alea.*
 And of deceite / and cursed forswerynges
 Blaspheme of Crist^t manslaughter / and wast^t also
 Of catel / and of tyme / and forthermo
 It is reproue / and contrarie of honour
 ffor to ben holden / a commune hasardour 596

And euere the hyer / he is of estaat
 The moore is he holden desolat
 If þat a Prynce / vseth hasardrye
 In alle gouernance / and policye 600
 He is / as by *commune* opynyōn
 Yholde / the lasse in reputaciōn
 ¶ Stilbon / that was a wys Embassadour
 Was sent to Corynthe / in ful gret honour 604
 ffor lacedomye / to make hire alliaunce
 And whan he cam / hym happed *par* chaunce
 That alle the gretteste / þat were of that lond
 Pleiynge at the hasard / he hem fond 608
 ffor which as soone / as it myghte be
 He stal hym hom agayn / to his contree
 And seyde / ther wol I nat lese my name
 Ny wol nat take on me / so greet defame 612
 Yow for to allie / vn-to none hasardours
 Sendeth / othere wise Embassadours
 ffor by my trouthe / me were leuere dye
 Than I yow sholde / to hasardours allye 616
 ffor ye that been / so glorious in honours
 Shal nat allye yow / with hasardours
 As by my wyl / ne as by my tretee
 This wise Philosophre / thus seyde he 620
 ¶ Looke eek / that to the kyng Demetrius
 The kyng of Parthes / as the book seith vs
 Sente hym a paire of dees / of gold in scorn [leaf 199, back]
 ffor he hadde vsed / hasard ther biforn 624
 ffor which / he heeld his glorie / or his renoun
 At no value / or reputacioun
 Lordes may fynden / oother manere pley
 Honeste ynow / to dryue the day away 628
 ¶ Now wol I speke / of oother false and grete
 A word or two / as olde bokes trete
 ¶ Greet sweryng^t is a thyng abhomynable
 And fals sweryng^t is yet^t moore reпреuable 632

The heighe god / forbad sweryng at al
 Wisse on Mathew / but in special ¶ *Nolite iurare om̃ino Mathei 5^o*
 Of sweryng^t seith the holy Ieremye ¶ *Ieremie 4^o. Iurabis in veritate*
 Thow shalt swere sooth thyne othes / & nat lye 636
 And swere in doom / and eek in rightwisnesse
 But ydel sweryng^t is a cursednesse
 ¶ Bihoold and se / þat in the firste table
 Of heighe goddes hestes honorable 640
 How þat the seconde heste of hym / is this
 Take nat my name / in ydel or amys
 Lo rather he forbedeth · swich sweryng^t
 Than homycide / or many a cursed thyng^t 644
 I seye / þat as by ordre / thus it standeth
 This knoweth / that hise hestes vnderstandeth
 How that the seconde heste of god / is that^t
 And forther ouer / I wol thee telle al þat^t 648
 That vengeance / shal nat parten from his hous
 That of hise othes / is to outrageous
 By goddes precious herte / and by his nayles
 And by the blood of Crist^t that is in hayles 652
 Seene is my chance / and thyn is cynk & treye
 By goddes armes / if thow falsly pleye
 This dagger / shal thurgh out thyn herte go
 This frut cometh / of the bicche bones two 656
 fforsweryng^t / Ire / falsnesse / homycide
 Now for the loue of Crist^t that for vs dyde
 Lete youre othes / bothe grete and smale
 But sires / now wol I / telle forth my tale 660
 ¶ These Riotours thre / of which I telle
 Longe erst^t er Pryme ronge of any belle
 Were set hem / in a Tauerne to drynke [leaf 200]
 And as they sat^t they herde a belle klynke 664
 Biforn a cors / was caryed to his graue
 That oon of hem / gan callen to his knaue
 Go bet quod he / and axe redily
 What cors is this / that passeth heer forby 668

And looke / þat thow reporte his name wel
 ¶ Sire quod this boy / it nedeth neuer a del
 It was me told / er ye cam heer two houres
 He was pardee / an old felawe of youre 672
 And sodeynly / he was yslayn to nyght
 ffordronke / as he sat on his bench vp-right
 Ther cam a priuee theef / men clepeth deeth
 That in this contree / al the peple sleeth 676
 And with his spere / he smoot his herte atwo
 And wente his wey / with-outen wordes mo
 He hath / a thousand slayn this pestilence
 And maister / er ye come in his presence 680
 Me thynketh / that it were necessarie
 ffor to be war / of swich an Aduersarie
 Beeth redy / for to meete hym euere moore
 Thus taughte me my dame / I sey namoore 684
 ¶ By Seinte Marie / seyde this Tauerner
 The child seith sooth / for he hath slayn this yer
 Henne ouer a myle / with-Inne a greet village
 Bothe man and womman / child and hyne & page 688
 I trowe / his habitacioñ be there
 To been auysed / greet wisdom it were
 Er that he dide / a man a dishonour
 ¶ Ye goddes armes / quod this Riotour 692
 Is it swich peril / with hym for to meete
 I shal hym seke / by wey / and eek by Strete
 I make avow / to goddes digne bones
 Herkneth felawes / we thre been al ones 696
 Lat ech of vs / holde vp his hand to oother
 And ech of vs / bicom e ootheres brother
 And we wol sleen / this false traytour deeth
 He shal be slayn / he þat so manye sleeth 700
 By goddes dignytee / er it be nyght
 ¶ Togidres han thise thre / hir trouthes plyght
 To lyue and dyen / ech of hem with oother [leaf 200, back]
 As thogh he were / his owene ybore brother 704

And vp they stirte / al dronken / in this rage
 And forth they goon; / towards that village
 Of which the Tauernner / hadde spoke biforn
 And many a grisly ooth / thanne han they sworn 708
 And Cristes blessed body / they to-rente
 Deeth shal be deed / if they may hym hente
 ¶ Whan they han goon / nat fully a myle
 Right as they wolde / han treden ouer a style 712
 An old man and a poure / with hem mette
 This olde man / ful mekely hem grette
 And seyde thus / now lordes god yow se
 ¶ The proudeste / of thise Riotours thre 716
 Answerde agayn / what carl *with* sory *grace*
 Why artow al forwrapped / saue thy face
 Why lyuestow so longe / in so greet age
 ¶ This olde man / gan looke in his visage 720
 And seyde thus / for I ne kan nat fynde
 A man / thogh þat I walked in-to Inde
 Neither in Citee / ne in no village
 That wolde chaunge / his youthe for myn age 724
 And ther-fore moot I han / myn age stille
 As longe tyme / as it is goddes wille
 ¶ Ne deeth allas / ne wol nat haue my lyf
 Thus walke I / lyk a resteleees caytyf 728
 And on the ground / which is my modres gate
 I knokke with my staf/ bothe erly and late
 And seye / leeuē moder leet me In
 Lo how I varysshe / flessch & blood & skyn 732
 Allas / whan shal my bones / been at reste
 Moder / with yow / wolde I chaunge my cheste
 That in my chambre / longe tyme hath be
 Ye for an heyre clowt' to wrappe me 736
 But yet to me / she wol nat' do that *grace*
 ffor which ful pale / and welked is my face
 But sires / to yow / it is no curteisye
 To speken / to an old man vileynye 740

But he trespase in word / or ellis in dede

In holy writ ye may your self wel rede

¶ Agayns an old man / hoor vp-on his heed [leaf 201] ¶ coram
canuto capite con-
surg,e¹] [¹ Rats]

Ye shal arise / wherfore I yeue yow reed

Ne dooth vn-to an old man / noon harm now 745

Namoore than þat ye wolde / men dide to yow

*In age // if þat ye so longe abyde

And god be with yow / wher ye go or ryde 748

I moot go thider / as I haue to go

¶ Nay olde cherl / by god thow shalt nat so

Seyde / this oother hasardour anon

Thow partest nat so lightly / by Seint Iohn 752

Thow speeke right now / of thilke traytour deeth

That in this contree / alle oure freendes sleeth

Haue here my trouthe / as thow art his espye

Tel wher he is / or thow shalt it abyde 756

By god / and by the holy sacrament

ffor soothly / thow art oon of his assent

To sleen vs yonge folk thow false theef /

¶ Now sires quod he / if þat yow be so leef 760

To fynde deeth / turn vp this croked wey

ffor in that groue / I lafte hym by my fey

Vnder a tree / and ther he wol abyde

Nat for youre boost he wol hym no thyng hyde 764

Se ye that ook right ther ye schal hym fynde

God saue yow / that boghte agayn man-kynde

And yow amende / thus seyde this olde man

¶ And euerich / of thise Riotours ran 768

Til he cam to that tree / and ther they founde

Of floryns fyne / of gold / ycoyned rounde

Wel ny an .viij. busschels / as hem thoughte

No lenger thanne / after deeth they soughte 772

But ech of hem / so glad was of the sighte

ffor þat the floryns / been so faire and brighte

That doun they sette hem / by this precious hoord

The worste of hem / he spak the firste word 776

¶ Bretheren quod he / taak kepe / what þat I seye
 My wit is greet' thogh þat I bourde and pleye
 This tresor hath ffortune / vn-to vs 3euen
 In myrthe and iolitee / oure lyf to lyuen 780
 And lightly as it cometh / so wol we spende
 Ey goddes precious dignytee / who wende
 To day / that we sholde han / so fair a grace [leaf 201, back]
 But myghte this gold / be caried fro this place 784
 Hoom to myn hous / or ellis vn-to youres
 ffor wel ye woot' that al this gold is oures
 Thanne were we / in heigh felicitee
 But trewely / by daye it may nat be 788
 Men wolde seyn / þat we were theues stronge
 And for oure owene tresor / doon vs honge
 This tresor / moste yearied be by nyghte
 As wisly / and as sleily / as it myghte 792
 Therefore I rede / that' cut amonges vs alle
 Be drawe / and lat se / wher the cut' wol falle
 And he þat hath the cut' with herte blithe
 Shal renne to towne / and that ful swithe 796
 And brynge vs / breed / and wyn / ful priuely
 And two of vs / shal kepen subtilly
 This tresor wel / and if he wol nat tarye
 Whan it is nyght' we wol this tresor carye 800
 By oon assent' wher as vs thynketh best'
 That oon of hem / the cut broghte in his fest'
 And bad hem drawe / and looke wher it wol falle
 And it fel / on the yongeste of hem alle 804
 And forth toward the town / he wente anon
 And also soone / as þat he was agon
 That oon of hem / spak thus vn-to that oother
 Thow knowest wel / thow art my sworn brother 808
 Thy profit' wol I telle thee anon
 Thow woost wel / þat oure felawe is agon
 And heere is gold / and that ful greet plentee
 That shal departed been / among vs thre 812

But natheles / if I kan shape it so
 That it departed were / among vs two
 Hadde I nat doon / a freendes torn to thee
 ¶ That oother answerde / I noot how that may be 816
 He woot þat the gold / is with vs tweye
 What shal we doon / what shal we to hym seye
 ¶ Shal it be conseil / seyde the firste shrewe
 And I shal telle / in a wordes fewe 820
 What we shul doon / and brynge it wel aboute
 ¶ I graunte quod that oother / out of doute
 That by my trouthe / I wol thee nat biwreye [leaf 202]
 ¶ Now quod the firste / thow woost wel we be tweye 824
 And two of vs / shul strengre be than oon
 Looke whan þat he is set that right anon
 Arys / as though thow woldest with hym pleye
 And I shal ryue hym / thurgh the sydes tweye 828
 Whil that thow strogelest with hym / as in game
 And with thy daggere / looke thow do the same
 And thanne shal / al this gold departed be
 My deere freend / bitwixe thee and me 832
 Thanne may we bothe / oure lustes al fulfille
 And pleye at dees / right at oure owene wille
 And thus acorded been / thise sherewes tweye
 To sleen the thridde / as ye han herd me seye 836
 ¶ This yongeste / which that wente to the toun
 fful ofte in herte / he rolleth vp and down
 The beautee of thise floryns / newe & brighte
 O lord quod he / if so were þat I myghte 840
 Hauē al this tresor / to my self allone
 Ther is no man / þat lyueth vnder the trone
 Of god / that sholde lyue / so myrie as I
 And at the laste / the feend oure enemy 844
 Putte in his thoght þat he sholde poyson beye
 With which he myghte sleen / his felawes tweye
 ffor why / the feend foond hym / in swich lyuyng
 That he hadde leue / hym to sorwe brynge 848

ffor this was outrelly / his ful entente
 To sleen hem bothe / and neuere to repente
 ¶ And forth he goth / no lenger wolde he tarye
 In to the toun / vn-to Apothecarye 852
 And preyed hym / þat he hym wolde selle
 Som poyson / that he myghte his rattes quelle
 And eek ther was / a polcat in his hawe
 That as he seyde / his capons hadde yslawe 856
 And fayn he wolde / wreke hym if he myghte
 On vermyn / that destroyed hym by nyghte
 ¶ The Pothecarie answerde / and thow shalt haue
 A thyng that also god / my soule saue 860
 In al this world / ther is no creature
 That ete / or dronke / hath of this confiture
 Nat but the montañce / of a corn of whete [leaf 202, back]
 That he ne shal his lyf / anoon for-lete 864
 Ye sterue he shal / and that in lasse while
 Than thow wolt goon a pass / nat but a myle
 The poyson / is so strong / and violent
 This cursed man / hath in his hand yhent 868
 This poyson in a box / and sith he ran
 In-to the nexte Strete / vn-to a man
 And borwed hym / large Botels thre
 And in the two / his poison poured he 872
 The thridde / he kepte clene for his drynke
 ffor al the nyght he shoope hym for to swynke
 In caryng of the gold / out of that place
 And whan this Riotour / with sory grace 876
 Hadde filled with wyn / hise grete Botels thre
 To hise felawes / agayn repaireth he
 ¶ What nedeth it to sarmone of it moore
 ffor right as they / hadde cast his deeth bifore 880
 Right so / they han hym slayn / and that anon
 And whan this was doon / thus spak that oon
 Now lat vs sitte and drynke / and make vs merye
 And afterward / we wol his body berye 884

And with that word / it happed hym *par cas*
 To take the Botel / ther the poyson was
 And drank/ and yaf his felawe drynke also
 ffor which anon / they storuen bothe two 888
 ¶ But certes I suppose / that Auyeen
 Wroot neuere in no Canon / ne in no fen
 Mo wonder signes / of empoysonyng
 Than hadde thise wrecches two / er hir endyng^t 892
 Thus ended been / thise homicides two
 And eek/ the false empoysonere also
 ¶ O · cursed synne / of alle cursednesse
 O · traytours homicide / o wikkednesse 896
 O · glotonye / luxure / and hasardrye
 Thou blasphemour of Crist^t with vileynye
 And othes grete / of vsage / and of pryde
 Allas mankynde / how may it bityde 900
 That to thy Creatour / which *pat* thee wroghte
 And with his *precious* herte blood / the boghte
 Thow art so fals / and so vnkynde allas [leaf 203]
 ¶ Now goode men / god foryeue yow youre *trespas* 904
 And ware yow / fro the synne of Auarice
 Myn holy pardoñ / may yow alle warisse
 So that ye offre nobles / or starlynges
 Or ellis siluer broches / spones / rynges 908
 Boweth youre heed / vnder this holy bulle
 Cometh vp ye wyues / offreth of youre wolle
 Youre name I entre / here in my rolle anon
 In-to the blisse of heuene / shul ye gon 912
 I yow assoile / by myn heigh power
 Ye *pat* wol offre / as clene and eek as cler
 As ye were born / and lo sires thus I *preche*
 And Ihesu crist^t that is oure soules leche 916
 So graunte yow / his pardoñ to receyue
 ffor that is best^t I wol yow nat deceyue
 ¶ But sires / o word / forgat I in my tale
 I haue Relikes and pardon in my male 920

As faire / as any man in Engelond
 Whiche were me yeuen / by the Popes hond
 If any of yow / wol of deuocioñ
 Offren / and han myn absolucioñ . 924
 Com forth anon / and kneleth here adoun
 And mekely / receyueth my pardoun
 Or ellis / taketh pardon as ye wende
 Al newe and fressh / at euery myles ende 928
 So þat ye offren alwey / newe and newe
 Nobles / or pens / whiche þat been good & trewe
 It is an honour / to euerich that is heer
 That ye mowe haue / a suffisant pardoner 932
 Tassoile yow / in contree as ye ryde
 ffor auentures / whiche þat may bityde
 Parauenture / ther may falle oon or two
 Doun of his hors / and breke his nekke atwo 936
 Looke swich a seuretee is it to yow alle
 That I am / in youre felaweship y-falle
 That may assoile yow / bothe moore & lasse
 Whan þat the soule / shal fro the body passe 940
 I rede / that oure hoost^t shal bigynne
 ffor he is moost^t enveloped in synne
 Com forth sire hoost / and offre first anon [leaf 203, back]
 And thow shalt kisse / the Relikes euerychon 944
 Ye for a grote / vnbokele anon thy purs
 ¶ Nay nay quod he / thanne haue I Cristes curs
 Lat be quod he / it shal nat be so thee ich
 Thow woldest^t make me kisse thyn olde breech 948
 And swere it were / a Relyk of a Seint^t
 Thogh it were / with thy fondement depeynt^t
 But by the croys / which þat Seint Eleyne foond
 I wold I hadde / thy coyloons in myn hond 952
 In stide of Relikes / or of Seintuarie
 Lat cutte hem of / I wol thee hem carie
 They shul be shryned / in an hogges toord
 ¶ This pardoner / answerde nat a word 956

So wrooth he was / no word ne wolde he seye
 ¶ Now quod oure hoost I wol no lenger pleye
 With thee / ne with noon oother angry man
 ¶ But right anon / the worthy knyght bigan 960
 Whan þat he saugh / þat al the peple lough
 Namore of this / for it is right ynough
 Sire Pardoner be glad / and murye of cheere
 And sire hoost that been to me so deere 964
 I pray yow / þat ye kisse the Pardoner
 And Pardoner / I pray thee / drawe thee neer
 And as we diden / lat vs lawe and pleye
 Anon they kiste / and ryden forþ hir weye 968

¶ Here is ended the Pardoners tale ॐ

GROUP B. (β. FRAGMENT III.)

§ 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

¶ Here bigynneth the Shipmannes tale

[Hengwrt MS, leaf 204]

A Marchant whilom / dwelled at Seint Denys
That riche was / for which men helde hym wys
A wyf he hadde / of excellent beautee
And compaignable / and reuelous was she
Which is a thyng^t that causeth moore dispence
Than worth / is al the cheere and reuerence 1196
That men hem doon / at festes and at daunces
Swich salutacions / and contenances
Passen / as dooth a shadwe vp on the wal
But wo is hym / that payen moot for al 1200
The sely housbonde / algate he moot paye
He moot vs clothe / and he moot vs arraye
Al for his owene worshi^pe / richely
In which array / we dauncen iolily 1204
And if *that* he noght may / *para*uenture
Or ellis / list no swich dispense endure
But thynketh / it is wasted and y-lost^t
Thanne moot another / payen for oure cost^t 1208
Or lene vs gold / and that is perilous
This noble Marchant^t heeld a worthy hous
ffor which / he hadde alday / so greet repair
ffor his largesse / and for his wyf was fair 1212
What wonder is / but herkneth to my tale
Amonges alle hise gestes / grete and smale
¶ Ther was a Monk^t a fair man and a bold
I trowe / a thritty wynter / he was old 1216
That euere in oon / was drawyng^t to that place
This yonge Monk^t that was so fair of face

Aqueynted was so / with the goode man
 Sith that hir firste knewliche bigan 1220
 That in his hous / as famulier was he
 As it is possible / any freend to be
 And for as muchel / as this goode man
 And eek this Monk of which þat I bigan 1224
 Were bothe two yborn / in o village
 The Monk hym claymeth / as for cosyng
 And he agayn / he seith nat ones nay [leaf 204, back]
 But was as glad ther of / as fowel of day 1228
 ffor to his herte / it was a gret plesance
 Thus been they knyht with eterne alliance
 And ech of hem / gan oother / for tassure
 Of bretherhede / whil þat hir lyf may dure 1232
 ¶ ffree was daun Iohn / and manly of dispence
 As in that hous / and ful of diligence
 To doon plesance / and also greet costage
 He nat forgaht to yeue the leeste page 1236
 In al that hous / but after hir degree
 He yaf the lord / and sith al his meynie
 Whan þat he cam / som manere honeste thyng
 ffor which / they were as glad of his comyng 1240
 As fowel is fayn / whan þat the sonne vp riseth
 Namore of this as now / for it suffiseth
 ¶ But so bifel / this Marchant on a day
 Shoope hym / to make redy his array 1244
 Toward the town of Brugges / for to fare
 To byen there / a porcion of ware
 ffor which he hath / to Parys sent anon
 A messenger / and preyed hath daun Iohn 1248
 That he sholde come / to Seint Denys and pleye
 With hym / and with his wyf a day or tweye
 Er he to Brugges wente / in alle wise
 ¶ This noble Monk of which I yow deuyse 1252
 Hath of his Abbot as hym list licence
 By cause he was a man / of heigh prudence

And eek an Officer / out for to ryde
 To seen hir granges / and hir bernys wyde 1256
 And vn to Seint denys / he comth anon
 Who was so welcome / as my lord daun Iohn
 Oure deere cosyn / ful of curteisye
 With hym broghte he / a Iubbe of Maluesye 1260
 And eek another / ful of fyn vernage
 And volatil / as ay was his vsage
 And thus I lete hem / ete and drynke and pleye
 This Marchant and this Monk / a day or tweye 1264
 ¶ The thridde day / this Marchant vp ariseth
 And on his nedes / sadly hym auyseth
 And vp / in to his Countour hous goth he [leaf 205]
 To rekene with hym self / wel may be 1268
 Of thilke yeer / how þat it with hym stood
 And how þat he / despended hadde his good
 And if that he / encreessed were or noon
 Hise bokes / and his bagges / many oon 1272
 He leyth biforn hym / on his Countyng bord
 fful riche was his tresor / and his hord
 ffor which ful faste / his Countour dore he shette
 And eek he nolde / þat no man sholde hym lette 1276
 Of his acountes / for the mene tyme
 And thus he sit / til it was passed prime
 ¶ Daun Iohn was risen / in the morwe also
 And in the gardyns / walketh to and fro 1280
 And hath his thynges seyde / ful curteisly
 ¶ This goode wyf / cam walkyng priuely
 In to the gardyn / ther he walketh softe
 And hym salueth / as she hath doon ofte 1284
 A mayde child / cam in hir compaignye
 Which as hir list she may gouerne and gye
 ffor yet vnder the yerde was the mayde
 ¶ O deere cosyn myn / daun Iohn she sayde 1288
 What eyleth yow / so rathe for to ryse
 ¶ Nece quod he / it oghte ynow suffise

ffyue houres / for to slepe / vp on a nyght^t
 But it were / for an old apalled wight^t 1292
 As been thise wedded men / þat lye and dare
 As in a forme / sit a wery hare
 Were al forstraught^t with houndes grete & smale
 But deere Nece / why be ye so pale 1296
 I trowe *certes* / that oure goode man
 Hath yow laboured / sith the nyght bigan
 That yow were nede / to resten hastily
 And with that word / he lough ful myrily 1300
 And of his owene thought^t he weex al reed
 ¶ This faire wyf / gan for to shake hir heed
 And seyde thus / ye god woot al quod she
 Nay cosyn myn / it stant nat so with me 1304
 ffor by that god / that yaf me soule and lyf
 In al the Reawme of ffrance / is ther no wyf
 That lasse lust hath / to that sory pley [leaf 205, back]
 ffor I may synge / allas and weilawey 1308
 That I was born / but to no wight^t quod she
 Dar I nat telle / how þat it stant with me
 Wher fore I thynke / out of this land to wende
 Or ellis / of my self / to make an ende 1312
 So ful am I / of drede / and eek of care
 ¶ This Monk bigan / vp on this wyf to stare
 And seyde / allas / my Nece god forbede
 That ye / for any sorwe / or any drede 1316
 ffordo your self / but telleth me youre grief
 Paraurenture / I may in youre meschief^t
 Conseille / or helpe / and therfore telleth me
 Al youre anoy / for it shal been secree 1320
 ffor on my Porthors / I make an oth
 That neuere in my lif / for lief / or loth
 Ne shal I / of no conseil / yow biwreye
 ¶ The same agayn to yow / quod she I seye 1324
 By god / and by this Porthors / I swere
 Thogh men me wolde / al in to peces tere

Ne shal I neuere / for to gon to helle
 Biwreye a word / of thyng þat ye me telle 1328
 Nat for no cosynage / ne alliance
 But verrailly / for loue and affiance
 Thus been they sworn / and her vp on they keste
 And ech of hem / tolde oother what hem leste 1332
 ¶ Cosyn quod she / if þat I hadde a space
 As I haue noon / and namely in this place
 Thanne wolde I telle / a legende of my lyf
 What I haue suffred / sith I was a wyf 1336
 With myn housbonde / al be he youre cosyn
 ¶ Nay quod this Monk^t by god and Seint Martin
 He is namore / cosyn vn to me
 Than is this leef^t þat hangeth on the tree 1340
 I clepe hym so / by Seint Denys of ffrance
 To han / the moore cause of aqueyntance
 Of yow / which I haue loued specially
 Abouen alle wommen / sikerly 1344
 This swere I yow / on my professioñ
 Telleth youre grief / lest þat he come adoun
 And hasteth yow / and goth away anon [leaf 206]
 ¶ My deere loue quod she / o my daun Iohn 1348
 flul lief were me / this conseil for to hyde
 But out it moot^t I may namoore abyde
 ¶ Myn housbonde is to me / the worste man
 That euere was / sith þat the world bigan 1352
 But sith I am a wyf / it sit nat me
 To tellen no wight^t of oure priuete
 Neither abedde / ne in noon oother place
 God shilde / I sholde it tellen for his grace 1356
 A wyf ne shal nat seyn / of hir housbonde
 But al honour / as I kan vnderstonde
 Saue vn to yow / thus muche I tellen shal
 As help me god / he is noght worth at al 1360
 In no degree / the value of a flye
 But yet^t me greueth moost his nygardy

And wel ye woo þat wommen naturelly [Late note, p. 180.]
 Desiren thynges .vj. as wel as I 1364
 They wolde / þat hir housbondes sholde be
 ¶ Hardy and wise / and riche / and ther-to free ¶ *nota*
 And buxom vn to his wyf / and fressh abedde
 But by that ilke lord / that for vs bledde 1368
 ffor his honour / my self for to arraye
 A sonday next I moot nedes paye
 An hundred frankes / or ellis am I lorn
 Yet were me leuere / þat I were vnborn 1372
 Than me were doon / a slaundre / or vileynye
 And if myn housbonde eek / myghte it espye
 I nere but lost and ther fore I yow preye
 Lene me this somme / or ellis moot I deye 1376
 Daun Iohn I seye / lene me thise hundred frankes
 Pardee I wil noght faile yow my thanks
 If þat yow list to doon / that I yow praye
 ffor at a certeyn day / I wol yow paye 1380
 And doon to yow / what plesance and seruyse
 That I may doon / right as yow list deuyse
 And but .I. do / god take on me vengeance
 As foul / as euere hadde Genelon of ffrence 1384
 ¶ This gentil Monk answerde in this manere
 Now trewely / myn owene lady deere
 I haue quod he / on yow so gret a routhe
 That I yow swere / and plighite yow my trouthe 1388
 That whan youre housbonde / is to fflandres fare [leaf 206, back]
 I wol deliuere yow / out of this care
 ffor I wol brynge yow / an hundred frankes
 And with that word / he caughte hire by the flankes 1392
 And hire embraceth harde / and kiste hire ofte
 Goth now youre wey quod he / al stille and softe
 And lat vs dyne / as soone / as þat ye may
 ffor by my chilyndre / it is Pryme of day 1396
 Goth now / and beth as trewe as I shal be
 ¶ Now ellis / god forbede sire quod she

And forth she goth / as iolif as a pye
 And bad the Cokes / þat they sholde hem hye 1400
 So þat men myghte dyne / and that anon
 Vp to hir housbonde / is his wyf ygon
 And knokketh at his Countour / boldely ^[1 ys interlined by a late hand]
 ¶ Who ¹ ther quod he / Peter it am I .qi la. 1404
 Quod she / what sire / how longe wol ye faste
 How longe tyme / wol ye rekene and caste
 Youre sommes / and youre bokes / and youre thynges
 The deucl haue part^t on alle swiche rekenynges 1408
 Ye haue ynogh pardee / of goddes sonde
 Com doun to day / and lat youre bagges stonde
 Ne be ye nat ashamed / that daun Iohn
 Shal fastyng / al this day elenge gon 1412
 What lat vs here a masse / and go we dyne
 ¶ Wyf quod this man / litel kanstow deuyne
 The curious bisynesse / that we haue
 ffor of vs chapmen / also god me saue 1416
 And by that lord / that clepid is Seint Yue
 Scarsly amonges .xij. x. shul thryue
 Continuelly / lastyng vn to oure age
 We may wel make cheere / and good visage 1420
 And dryue forth the world / as it may be
 And kepen oure estat^t in pryuetee
 Til we be dede / or ellis that we pleye
 A pilgrimage / or goon out of the weye 1424
 And ther fore / haue I gret necessitee
 Vp on this queynte world / tauyse me
 ffor euere mo / we mote stonde in drede
 Of hap and ffortune / in oure chapmanhede 1428
 ¶ To fflandres wol I go / tomorwe at day [leaf 207]
 And come agayn / as soone as euere I may
 ffor which my deere wyf / I thee biseke
 As be to euery wight^t buxom and meke 1432
 And for to kepe oure good / be curious
 And honestly / gouerne wel oure hous

Thow hast ynow / in euery manere wise
 That to a thrifty houshold / may suffice 1436
 Thee lakketh noon array / ne no vitaille
 Of siluer in thy purs / shaltow nat faille
 And with that word / his Countour dore he shette
 And doun he goth / no lenger wolde he lette 1440
 But hastily / a masse was ther seyde
 And spedily / the tables were yleyd
 And to the dyner / faste they hem spedde
 And richely this Monk^t the chapman fedd 1444
 ¶ At after dyner / daun Iohn sobrelly
 This chapman took a part^t and priuely
 He seyde hym thus / cosyn it standeth so
 That wel I se / to Brugges wol ye go 1448
 God and Seint Austyn / spede yow and gyde
 I pray yow cosyn / wysly þat ye ryde
 Gouverneth yow also / of youre diete
 Atemprelly / and namely / in this hete 1452
 Bitwix vs two / nedeth no strange fare
 ffarewel cosyn / god shilde yow fro care
 And if þat any thyng^t by day or nyght
 If it lye in my power / and my myght^t 1456
 That ye me wol comande / in any wise
 It shal be doon / right as ye wol deuyse
 ¶ O thing er þat ye goon / if it may be
 I wold preye yow / for to lene me 1460
 An hundred frankes / for a wyke or tweye
 ffor certeyn bestes / þat I moste beye
 To store with a place / that is oures
 God help me so / I wolde it were youre 1464
 I shal nat faille / seurely of my day
 Nat for a thousand frankes / a myle way
 But lat this thyng be secree / I yow preye
 ffor yet to nyght^t thise bestes moot I beye 1468
 And fare now wel / myn owene cosyn deere [leaf 207, back]
 Grant mercy / of youre cost^t and of youre cheere

- ¶ This noble Marchant^t gentilly anon
 Answerde and seyde / o cosyn myn daun Ioĥn 1472
 Now sikerly / this is a smal requeste
 My gold is youres / whan þat it yow leste
 And nat oonly my gold / but my chaffare
 Tak what yow list^t god shilde þat ye spare 1476
 But o thyng is / ye knowe it wel ynow
 Of Chapmen / that hir moneye is hir plow
 We may creance / whil we han a name
 But goldlees for to been / it is no game 1480
 Pay it agayn / whan it lyth in youre ese
 After my myght^t ful fayn wol I yow plesse
 ¶ Thise hundred frankes / he fette forth anon
 And priuely / he took hem to daun Ioĥn 1484
 No wight in al this world / wiste of this lone
 Sauyng^t this Marchant^t and daun Ioĥn allone
 They drynke / and speke / and rome a while & pleye
 Til that daun Ioĥn / rideth to his Abbeye 1488
 ¶ The morwe cam / and forth this Marchant rydeth
 To fflandres ward / his Prentys wel hym gydeth
 Til he cam / in to Brugges murily
 Now goth this Marchant^t faste and bisily 1492
 Aboute his nede / and byeth and creañceth
 He neither / pleyeth at the dees / ne daunceth
 But as a Marchant^t shortly for to telle
 He let his lyf / and ther I lete hym dwelle 1496
 ¶ The sonday next / the Marchant was agon
 To Seint denys / yeomen is daun Ioĥn
 With crowne and berd / al fressh & newe shaue
 In al the hous / ther nas so litel a knaue 1500
 Ne no wight ellis / þat he nas ful fayn
 That my lord daun Ioĥn / was come agayn
 And shortly / to the poynt^t right for to gon
 This faire wyf^t accorded with daun Ioĥn 1504
 That for thise hundred frankes / he sholde al nyght^t
 Haue hire in his armes / bolt vpright^t

And this acord / parfourned was in dede
 In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede 1508
 Til it was day / that daun Ioĥn wente his way [leaf 208]
 And bad the meynee / fare wel haue good day
 ffor noon of hem / ne no wight in the town
 Hath of daun Ioĥn / right no suspecioun 1512
 And forth he rydeth hom / til his Abbeye
 Or where hym list namoore of hym I seye
 ¶ This Marchant whan þat ended was the faire
 To Seint Denys / he gan for to repaire 1516
 And with his wyf / he maketh feste and cheere
 And telleth hire / that chaffare is so deere
 That nedes / moste he make a cheuyssance
 ffor he was bounden / in a reconyssance 1520
 To paye / twenty thousand sheelde anon
 ffor which / this Marchant is to Parys gon
 To borwe / of certeyne freendes / that he hadde
 A certeyn frankes / and somme with hym he ladde 1524
 And whan þat he was come / in to the town
 ffor greet chiertee / and greet affeccioun
 Vn to daun Ioĥn / he first goth / hym to pleye
 Nat for to axe / or borwe of hym moneye 1528
 But for to wite / and seen of his welfare
 And for to tellen hym / of his chaffare
 As freendes doon / whan they been met yfeere
 Daun Ioĥn / hym maketh feste / and murye cheere 1532
 And he hym tolde agayn / ful specially
 How he hadde / wel ybought and graciously
 Thanked be god / al hool his marchandise
 Saue þat he moste / in alle maner wyse 1536
 Maken a cheuyssance / as for his beste
 And thanne he sholde been / in ioye and reste
 ¶ Daun Ioĥn answerde / certes I am fayn
 That ye in heele / ar comen hom agayn 1540
 And if þat I were riche / as haue I blisse
 Of twenty thousand sheeld / sholde ye nat mysse

ffor ye so kyndely / this oother day
 Lente me gold / and as I kan and may 1544
 I thanke yow / by god / and by Seint Iame
 But nathelees / I took vn to oure dame
 Yowre wyf at hom / the same gold agayn
 Vp on youre bench / she woot it wel certayn 1548
 By *certeyn* toknes / that I kan yow telle [leaf 208, back]
 Now by youre leue / I may no lenger dwelle
 Oure Abbot wol out of this town anon
 And in his compaignye / moot I gon 1552
 Greet wel oure dame / myn owene Neece swete
 And fare wel deere cosyn / til we meete
 ¶ This Marchant which þat was ful war and wys
 Creanced hath / and payed eek in Parys 1556
 To *certeyn* lombardes / redy in hir hond
 The somme of gold / and gat of hem his bond ¶ *i. obligacionem.*
 And hoom he gooth / murye as a Papyniay
 ffor wel he knew / he stood in swich array 1560
 That nedes moste he wynne / in that viage
 A thousand frankes / abouen al his costage
 ¶ His wyf ful redy / mette hym at the gate
 As she was wont of old vsage algate 1564
 And al that nyght in myrthe they bisette
 ffor he was riche / and cleerly out of dette
 ¶ Whan it was day / this Marchant gan embrace
 His wyf al newe / and kiste hire on hir face 1568
 And vp he goth / and maketh it ful tough
 Namooore quod she / by god ye haue ynough
 And wantownely agayn / with hym she pleyde
 Til at the laste / this Marchant seyde 1572
 ¶ By god quod he / I am a litel wroth
 With yow my wyf / al thogh it be me looth
 And woot ye why / by god as þat I gesse
 That ye han maad / a manere strangenesse 1576
 Bitwixen me / and my cosyn daun Ioħn
 Ye sholde han warned me / er I had gon

That he yow hadde / a hundred frankes payed
 By redy tokne / and heeld hym yuele apayed 1580
 ffor that I to hym / spak of cheuyssance
 Me semed so / as by his contenance
 But nathelees / by god oure heuene kyng'
 I thoghte nat' to axe of hym no thyng' 1584
 I pray thee wyf' ne do namoore so
 Tel me alwey / er that I fro thee go
 If any dettour / hath in myn absence
 Ypayed thee / lest thurgh thy necligence 1588
 I myghte hym axe / a thyng' þat he hath payed [leaf 209]
 ¶ This wyf / was nat afered ne afrayed
 But boldly she seyde / and that anon
 Marie I diffye / the false Monk' daun Iohn 1592
 I kepe nat of his toknes / neuer a del
 He took me certeyn gold / this woot I wel
 What yuel thedam / on his Monkes snowte
 ffor god it woot' I wende with outen dowte 1596
 That he hadde yeue it me / by cause of yow
 To doon ther with / myn honour and my prow
 ffor cosynage / and eek for bele cheere
 That he hath had / ful ofte tymes heere 1600
 ¶ But sith I se / it stant in this disioynt'
 I wole answere yow / shortly to the poynt'
 Ye han mo slakker dettours / than am I
 ffor I wol paye yow / wel and redily 1604
 ffro day to day / and if so be I fayle
 I am youre wyf / score it vp on my tayle
 And I shal paye / as soone as euere I may
 ffor by my trouthe / I haue on myn array 1608
 And nat in wast' bistowed euery del
 And for I haue / bistowed it so wel
 ffor youre honour / for goddes sake I seye
 As be nat wrooth / but lat vs laughe & pleye 1612
 Ye shal / my ioly body han to wedde
 By god / I wol nocht paye yow but a bedde

fforgyue it me / myn owene spouse deere
 Turn hiderward / and maketh bettre cheere 1616
 ¶ This Marchant^t saugh / ther was no remedye
 And for to chide / it nere but folye
 Syn that the thyng^t may nat amended be
 Now wyf he seyde / and I foryeue it thee 1620
 But by thy lyf / ne be namoore so large
 Keepe bet thy good / this yeue I thee in charge
 Thus endeth my tale / and god vs sende
 Taillynge ynough / vn to oure lyues ende . 1624

¶ Here endeth / the Shipmannes tale 𐝰

[As there is no room in this print for the notes in the margin of the MS, they are put here, with the numbers of the lines to which they refer.]

1. 1363. A woman wolld haue her husband / to be hardye / wyse / Ryche free / buxom / that is to saye gentell / and to be freshe in bed / these / syxe things a woman dothe desyre / as Mr Chaucer dothe wryte. [MS, leaf 206.] [In a late hand.]

1. 1770. ¶ legamus Apocalipsim Iohannis / et ibi reperimus agnum super montem syon & cum illo .Cxluiij. Milia signatorum &c qui cantant canticum nouum &c.

¶ Isti sunt qui cum mulieribus se non coinquinauerunt virgines autem permanserunt /. Hii sunt qui secuntur agnum quocumque vadit &c. [MS, leaf 211, back.]

1. 1817. ¶ Rachel plorans filios suos noluit consolari &c.

1. 1828. // de puero qui cantauit/ de gloriosa virgine

// de maria quicquid sciuit	}	Maternam inopiam	}
puer cantans enutriuit			
// hunc Iudeus nequam strauit	}	Diram per Inuidiam	}
domo sua quem humauit			
// Mater querens hunc vocauit	}	Solita preconia	}
hic in terra recantauit			
// Puer liber mox exiuit	}	Iudeos &c.	}
Mortis reos lex puniuit			

[MS, ff 212, bk.]

¶ Herke the myrie Wordes / of the Worthy Hoost^t 
[leaf 209, back]

WEl seyð / by corpus dominus / quod oure Hoost^t
 Now longe / moote thow saille by the coost^t
 Thow gentil Maister / gentil Maryner
 God yeve the Monk / a thousand last quaad yeer 1628
 A .ha. felawes / beth war of swich a Iape
 The Monk putte / in the mannes hood an Ape
 And in his wyues eek / by Seint Austyn
 Draweth no Monkes / moore in to youre In 1632
 ¶ But now passe ouer / and lat vs seke aboute
 Who shal now telle first^t of al this route
 Another tale / and with that word he sayde
 As curteisly / as it hadde been a mayde 1636
 My lady Prioressse / by youre leue
 So that .I. wiste / I sholde yow nat agreue
 I wolde demen / that ye telle sholde
 A tale next^t if so were that ye wolde 1640
 Now wol ye vouche it sauf^t my lady deere
 ¶ Gladly quod she / and seyde as ye shal heere .

¶ The prohome of the Prioress tale 𐀀

Domine dominus noster 𐀀

O lord oure lord / thy name how merueilous
 Is in this large world / ysprad quod she
 ffor nat oonly / thy laude precious
 Parfourned is / by men of dignytee 1646
 But by the mouth of children / thy bountee
 Parfourned is / for on the brest soukyng
 Som tyme / shewen they thyn heryng 1649

¶ Wher fore in laude / as I best kan or may
 Of thee / and of the white lilye flour
 Which pat the bar / and is a mayde alway
 To telle a storie / I wol do my labour 1653
 Nat that I may / encressen hir honour
 ffor she hir self / is honour / and the Roote
 Of bountee next hir sone / and soules boote 1656

¶ O. moder mayde / o mayde moder free [leaf 210]
 O. busshe vnbrent brennyng in Moyses sighte
 That rauysedest down / fro the deitee
 Thurgh thyn humblesse / the goost / pat in thalighte 1660
 Of whos vertu / whan he thyn herte lighte
 Conceyued was / the fadres sapience
 Help me / to telle it in thy reuerence 1663

¶ Lady thy bountee / thy magnificence
 Thy vertu / and thy grete humylitee
 Ther may no tonge expresse / in no science
 ffor som tyme lady / er men praye to thee 1667
 Thow goost biforn / of thy benygnytee
 And getest vs / the light of thy prayere
 To gyden vs / vn to thy sone so deere 1670

¶ My konnyng is so wayk^t o blisful queene
 ffor to declare / thy grete worthynesse
 That I ne may / the weighte nat sustene
 But as a child / of twelue month old / or lesse 1674
 That kan vnnethe / any word expresse
 Right so fare I / and ther fore I yow preye
 Gideth my song^t that I shal of yow seye 1677

¶ Explicit prohemium 𐀚

¶ Here biggynneth the Prioress tale of

¶ Alma redemptoris mater

Ther was in Asye / in a greet Citee
 Amonges cristen folk^t a Iewerye
 Sustened / by a lord / of that contree
 ffor foul vsure / and lucre of vileynye ^{turpe lucrum} 1681
 Hateful / to Crist^t and to his compaignye
 And thurgh the strete / men m[ygh^l]te ryde & wende
 ffor it was free / and o[.^l] [^l MS torn] 1684

¶ A litel scole / of cristen folk ther stood [leaf 210, back]
 Doun at the ferther ende / in which ther weere
 Children an heepe / ycomen of cristen blood
 That lerned in that scole / yeer by yere 1688
 Swich manere doctrine / as men vsed there
 This is to seyn / to syngen and to rede
 As smale children doon / in hir childhede 1691

¶ Among thise children / was a wydwes sone
 A litel clergeon / .vij. yeer of age
 That day by day / to scole was his wone
 And eek also / wher as he say thymage 1695
 Of Cristes moder / hadde he in vsage
 As hym was taught^t to knele adoun and seye
 His Aue Marie / as he goth by the weye 1698

¶ Thus hath this wydwe / hir litel sone ytaught^t
 Oure blisful lady / Cristes moder deere
 To worshiþe ay / and he forgat it naught^t
 ffor sely child / wol alwey soone lere 1702
 But ay / whan I remembre / of this matere
 Seint Nicholas / stant euere in my *presence*
 ffor he so yong^t to Crist dide reuerence 1705

¶ This litel child / his litel book lernynge
 As he sat in the scole / at his prymer
 He Alma redemptoris / herde synge
 As children / lerned hir Antiphoner 1709
 And as he dorste / he drow hym ner and ner
 And herkned ay / the wordes and the note
 Til he the firste vers / koude al by rote 1712

Nat wiste he / what this latyn was to seye.
 ffor he so yong^t and tendre was of age
 But on a day / his felawe gan he preye
 Texpounden hym this song^t in his langage 1716
 Or telle hym why / this song was in vsage
 This prayde he hym / [...¹]struen and declare
 [.¹]re [¹ MS is torn away]

¶ His felawe / which þat elder was than he [leaf 211]
 Answerde hym thus / this song^t I haue herd seye
 Was maked / of oure blisful lady free
 Hir to salue / and eek hire for to preye 1723
 To been oure helpe / and socour / whan we deye
 I kan namoore / expounde in this matere
 I lerne song^t I kan but smal gramere 1726

¶ And is this song^t maked in reuerence
 Of Cristes moder / seyde this Innocent^t
 Now certes / I wol do my diligence
 To konne it al / er Cristemasse is went^t 1730

Thogh þat I / for my Prymer shal be shent
 And shal be beten / thries in an houre
 I wol it konne / oure lady for to honoure 1733

¶ His felawe taughte hym / homward priuely
 firo day to day / til he koude it by rote
 And thanne he soong^t it / wel and boldely
 firo word to word / acordyng with the note 1737
 Twyes a day / it passed thurgh his throte
 To scoleward / and homward / whan he wente
 On Cristes moder / set was his entente 1740

As I haue seyde / thurgh out the Iuerye
 This litel child / as he cam to and fro
 fful murily / wolde he synge and crye
 O Alma redemptoris / euere mo 1744
 The swetnesse / his herte perced so
 Of Cristes moder / that to hir to preye
 He kan nat stynte / of syngyng by the weye 1747

¶ Oure firste foo / the Serpent Sathanas
 That hath in Iewes herte / his waspes nest^t
 Vp swal and seyde / o Hebrayk peple allas
 Is this to yow / a thyng^t that is honest^t 1751
 That swich a boy / shal walken As hym lest^t
 In youre despit^t and synge of [. . .¹]h sentence [¹ MS torn]
 Which is agayns / oure l[.¹] 1754

¶ firo theennes forth / the Iewes han conspired [leaf 211, back]
 This Innocent^t out of this world to chace
 An homicide / ther-to han they hired
 That in an Aleye / at a priuee place 1758
 And as the child / gan for by for to pace
 This cursed Iew / hym hente / and heeld hym faste
 And kitte his throte / and in a pit hym caste 1761

¶ I seye / that in a wordrobe / they hym threwe
 Wher as thise Iewes / purgen hir entraille
 O cursed folk^t of herodes / al newe
 What may / youre yuel entente yow auaille 1765
 Mordre wol out / *certeyn* it wol nat faille
 And namely / ther as thonour of god shal sprede
 The blood out cryeth / on youre cursed dede 1768

¶ O martir sonde^d to virginitee
 Now maystow syngen / folwyng euere in oon [*Latin note*, p. 180]
 The white lamb celestial quod she
 Of which / the grete Euangelist Seint Iohn 1772
 In Pathmos wroot^t which seith þat they þat gon
 Biforn this lamb / and synge a song al newe
 That neuere ^{carⁿaliter} flesshly / womman they ne knewe 1775

¶ This poure wydwe / awaiteth al that nyght^t
 After hir litel child / but he cam noght^t
 ffor which as soone / as it was dayes lyght^t
 With face pale / of drede and bisy thought^t 1779
 She hath at scole / and ellis where hym sought
 Til fynally / she gan so fer espie
 That he last seyn was / in the Iewerie 1782

¶ With modres pitee / in hir brest enclosed
 She goth / as she were half out of hir mynde
 To euery place / wheras she hath supposed
 By liklyhede / hir litel child to fynde 1786
 And euere / on Cristes moder / meke and kynde
 She cryde / and at the laste [. . . .¹] she wroghte [*MS torn*]
 [.¹]ghte 1789

She frayneth / and she prayeth pitously [*leaf 212*]
 To euery Iew / that dwelte in thilke place
 To telle hire / if hir child / wente oght forby
 They seyde nay / but Ihesu of his grace 1793

Yaf in hir thought in with a litel space
 That in that place / after hir sone she cryde
 Wher he was casten / in a pit bisyde 1796

¶ O grete god / that parfournest thy laude
 By mouth of Innocentz / lo here thy myght
 This gemme of chastitee / this Emeraude
 And eek of martirdom / the Ruby bright 1800
 Ther he with throte ycoruen / lay vpright
 He Alma redemptoris / gan to synge
 So loude / that al the place gan to rynge 1803

¶ The cristen folk that thurgh the strete wente
 In coomen / for to wondre vp on this thyng
 And hastily / they for the Prouost sente
 He cam anon / with outen tariyng 1807
 And herieth Crist that is of heuene kyng
 And eek his moder / honour of mankynde
 And after that the Iewes leet he bynde 1810

¶ This child / with pitous lamentaciō
 Vp taken was / syngyng his song alway
 And with honour / of greet procepciō
 They carien hym / vn to the nexte Abbay 1814
 His moder swownyng by his beere lay
 Vnnethe myghte / the peple that was there
 This newe Rachel / bryngen fro his beere [Latin note, p. 180]

¶ With torment and with shameful deth echon
 This Prouost dooth thise Iewes for to sterue
 That of this mordre wiste / and that anon
 He nolde / no swich cursednesse obserue 1821
 Yuel shal haue / that yuel wol disserue
 Ther fore with wilde hors [he di¹]de hem drawe [MS torn]
 And after that he [.¹] 1824

¶ Vp on his beere / ay lyth this Innocent^[leaf 212, back]
 Biforn the chief Auter / whil the masse laste
 And after that the Abbot^[Latin note, p. 180] with his Couent
 Han sped hem / for to buryen hym ful faste 1828
 And whan they / holy water / on hym caste
 Yet spak this child / whan spreynd was holy water
 And song^t O alma redemptoris mater 1831

¶ This Abbot which þat was an holy man
 As monkes ben / or ellis oghten be
 This yonge child / to coniure he bigan
 And seyde / o deere child I halsen thee 1835
 In vertu / of the holy Trinitee
 Tel me / what is thy cause for to synge
 Sith þat thy thro'te is kit to my semynge 1838

¶ My throte is kit vn to my nekke boon
 Seyde this child / and as by wey of kynde
 I sholde haue dyed / ye longe tyme agoon
 But Ihesu crist as ye in bokes fynde 1842
 Wol þat his glorie laste / and be in mynde
 And for the worshipe / of his moder deere
 Yet may I synge / O alma / loude and clere 1845

¶ This welle of mercy / Cristes moder swete
 I loued alwey / as after my konnynge
 And whan þat I my lyf sholde forlete
 To me she cam / and bad me for to synge 1849
 This Antheme / verrailly in my deiynge
 As ye han herd / and whan þat I had songe
 Me thoughte / she leyde a greyn vp on my tonge 1852

¶ Wherefore I synge / and synge moot certeyn
 In honour / of that blisful mayden free
 Til fro my tonge / of taken is the greyn
 And after that thus seyde she to me 1856

My litel child / now wil I fecche thee
 Whan þat the greyn is f[rom t¹]hy tonge ytake [¹ MS torn]
 Be nat ag[.¹] 1859

¶ This holy monk' this Abbot' hym mene I [leaf 213]
 His tonge out caughte / and took away the greyn
 And he / yaf vp the goost ful softly
 And whan this Abbot' hadde this wonder seyn 1863
 Hise salte teerys / triked doun as reyn
 And gruf he fil / al flat vp on the grounde
 And stille he lay / as he had leyn ybounde 1866

¶ The Couent eek / lay on the pauement
 Wepyng / and heryen cristes moder deere
 And after that they ryse / and forth been went'
 And toke away this martir / from his beere 1870
 And in a tounge / of Marbilstones cleere
 Enclosen they / this litel body swete
 Ther he is now / god leue vs for to meete 1873

¶ O yonge Hugh of Lyncoln / slayn also
 With cursd Iewes / as it is notable
 ffor it is / but a litel while ygo
 Preye eek for vs / we synful folk vnstable 1877
 That of his mercy / god so merciable
 On vs / his grete mercy multiplie
 ffor reuerence / of his moder Marie. Amen. 1880

¶ Here endeth / the Prioress tale.

¶ Bihoold the myrie talkyng/ of the Hoost/. to
Chaucer 𐝱

WHan seyde was al this myracle / euery man
As sobre was / that wonder was to se
Til that oure hoost^t iapen he bigan .i. Chaucer
And thanne at erst^t he looked vp on me 1884
And seyde thus / what man artow quod he
Thow lookest^t as thow woldest fynde an hare
ffor euere vp on the ground / I se thee stare 1887

¶ Approche neer / and looke vp myrily [leaf 213, back]
Now war yow sires / and lat this man haue place
He in the wast^t is shape as wel as I
This were a popet^t in an arm tenbrace 1891
ffor any womman / smal and fair of face
He semeth eluyssh / by his contenance
ffor vn to no wight^t dooth he no daliance 1894

¶ Sey now som what^t syn oother folk han sayd
Telle vs a tale / of myrthe / and that anon
Hoost quod I / ne beth nat yuele ypayd
ffor oother tale / *certes* kan I noon 1898
But of a rym / I lerned longe agoon
Ye that is good quod he / now shul we heere
Som deyntee thyng^t me thynketh by his cheere 1901

¶ Here bigynneth Chaucers tale of Thopas

[*Fit I.*]

[*Each third line is on the right of its couple, in the MS, and there are no breaks between the stanzas.*]

Listeth lordes / in good entent
 And I wil telle verrayment
 Of myrthe / and of solas 1904
 Al of a knyght^t was fair and gent
 In bataille / and in tornament
 His name / was sir Thopas 1907

¶ Yborn he was / in fer contree
 In fflaundes / al biyonde the see
 At Poperyng^t in the place 1910
 His fader was / a man ful free
 And lord he was / of that contree
 As it was / goddes grace 1913

¶ Sir Thopas wax / a doghty swayn
 Whit was his face / as Payndemayn
 His lippes reed as Rose 1916
 His rode is lyk / scarlet in grayn
 As I yow telle / in good certayn
 He hadde a semely nose 1919

¶ His heer / his berd / was lyk Safrown
 That to his girdel / raughte adown
 Hise shoon / of Cordewane 1922
 Of Brugges / were his hosen brown
 His Robe was / of syklatown
 That coste many a Iane 1925

- ¶ He koude hunte / at wilde deer
 And ride an hawkyng^t for Ryuer
 With grey goshawk on honde 1928
 Ther-to he was / a good Archier
 Of wrastlyng^t was ther noon his pier
 Ther any Ram shal stonde 1931
- ¶ fful many mayde / bright in bour [leaf 214]
 They moorne for hym / *par* amour
 Whan hem were bet to slep[e] 1934
 But he was chaast^t and no lechour
 And sweete / as is the brambel flour
 That bereth the rede hepe 1937
- ¶ And so it fel / vp on a day
 ffor sothe / as I yow telle may
 Sir Thopas / wolde out ryde 1940
 He warth vp on / his Steede gray
 And in his hand / a launcegay
 A long swerd / by his syde 1943
- ¶ He priketh thurgh / a fair fforest^t
 Ther Inne / is many a wilde best^t
 Ye bothe / bukke and hare 1946
 And as he priketh / North & Est^t
 I telle it yow / hym hadde alme^t
 bitydde / a sory care 1949
- ¶ There spryngen herbes / grene & smale
 The licorys / and Cetewale
 And many a clowe Gylofre 1952
 And notemuge / to putte in Ale
 Wheither it^t be moyste or stale
 Or / for to leye in cofre 1955

- ¶ The bryddes synge / it is no nay
 The Sperhauk' and the Popyniai
 That ioye / it was to here 1958
 The Thurstelock / made eek his lay
 The wodedowue / vp on the spray
 She sang' ful loude & clere 1961
- ¶ Sire Thopas fil / in loue longynge
 Al whan he herde / the thrustel synge
 And pryked / as he were wood 1964
 His fayre Steede / in his prikyng
 So swatte / þat men myghte hym wrynge
 His sydes / were al blood 1967
- ¶ Sir Thopas eek/ so wery was
 ffor prikyng/ on the softe gras
 So fiers / was his corrage 1970
 That doun he leyde hym / in the plas
 To make his Steede / som solas
 And yaf hym / good forage 1973
- ¶ O Seinte Marie / benedicite
 What eyleth / this loue at me
 To bynde me / so soore 1976
 Me dremed / al this nyght pardee
 An Elf queene / shal my lemman be
 And slepe / vnder my gore 1979
- ¶ An Elf queene / wol I haue ywys
 ffor in this world / no womman is
 Worthy to be my make //
 in towne 1982
 Alle othere wommen / I forsake
 And to an Elf queene / I me take
 by dale / and eek by downe 1986

¶ In to his Sadel / he clamb anoon
 And priketh ouer / style and stoon
 An Elf queene / for tespye 1989
 Til he so longe / hath riden & goon
 That he foonð / in a pryuee woon
 The contree of ffairye // 1992
 So wyldē?
 ffor in that contree / was ther noon [leaf 214, back]
 [. *no gap in the MS.*]
 Neither wyf / ne childe 1996

¶ Til þat ther cam / a greet geaunt
 His name was / sire Olifaunt
 A perilous man of dede 1999
 He seyde child / by Termagaunt
 But if thow pryke / out of myn haunt
 Anon I sle thy Steede 2002
 ¶ with Mace
 ¶ Heere is this queene / of ffairye
 With harpe & pipe / & Symphonie
 dwelliŋg in this place 2006

¶ The child seyde / als mote I thee
 Tomorwe / wil I meete thee /
 Whan I haue myn Armowre 2009
 ¶ And yet I hope / *par* ma fay
 That thow shalt with this launcegay
 Abyen it ful sowre 2012
 ¶ Thy Mawe
 Shal I percen / if I may
 Er it be fully pryme of day
 ffor here shaltow ben slawe 2016

- ¶ Sire Thopas / drow abak ful faste
 This geant' at hym stones caste
 Out of a fel staf slynge 2019
- ¶ But faire escapeth / child Thopas
 And al it was / thurgh goddes graas
 And thurgh his fair berynge 2022
- 3et lesteth lordes / to my tale
 Murier than the nyghtyngale
 I wol yow rowne 2025
- How sire Thopas / with sydes smale
 Prikyng' ouer hyH and dale
 Is come agayn to towne 2028
- ¶ Hys murye men / comanded he
 To make hym / bothe game and glee
 ffor nedes moste he fighte 2031
- With a geant' with heuedes thre
 ffor paramour / and Iolitee
 Of oon / that shoon ful brighte 2034
- ¶ Do come he seyde / my Mynstrales
 And Gestours / for to tellen tales
 Anon / in myn Armyng' 2037
- Of romances / that been reales
 Of Popes / and of Cardynales
 And eek / of loue likyng 2040
- ¶ They fette hym first' swete wyn
 And Mede eek' in a Maselyn
 And real Spicerye 2043
- Of gyngebred / that was ful fyn
 And lycorys / and eek Comyn
 With Sugre / that is trye 2046

- ¶ He dide next^t his white leer
 Of clooth of lake / fyn & cleer
 A breech / and eek a Sherte 2049
 And next his Sherte / an Aketoñ
 And ouer that^t an haubergeoñ
 ffor percying^t of his herte 2052
- ¶ And ouer that^t a fyn hauberk^t
 Was al ywroght^t of Iewes werk^t
 fful strong it was of plate 2055
 And ouer that / his cote Armour [leaf 215]
 As whit as is / a lillie flour
 In which / he wol debate 2058
- ¶ His sheeld was al / of gold so reed
 And ther Inne was / a bores heed
 A Charbocle / by his syde 2061
 And there he swoor / on Ale and breed
 How þat the geant / shal be deed
 Bityde / what bityde 2064
- ¶ Hise Iambeux were / of quyrboily
 His swerdes shethe / of Yuory
 His helm / of laton bright^t 2067
 His Sadel was / of Rewel bon
 His brydel / as the sonne shon
 Or as the moone light^t 2070
- ¶ His spere was / of fyn Cipres
 That bodeth werre / and no thyng pes
 The heed / ful sharpe ygrounde 2073
 His Steede was / al dappel gray
 It goth an Ambel / in the way
 fful softely / and rounde // 2076

In londe

¶ Lo lordes myne / here is a fit

If ye wole / any moore of it

To telle it wol I fonde

2080

[Fit II.]

n Ow hoold youre mouth *per* charitee

Bothe knyght and lady free

And herkneth to my spelle

2083

¶ Of bataille / and of chivalry

And of ladyes / loue drury

Anon / I wol yow telle

2086

¶ Men speken / of Romances of pris

Of Hornchild / and of Ypotys

Of Beves and Sir Gy

2089

Of Sire lybeux / and playn damour

But sire Thopas / he bereth the flour

Of real Chivalry

2092

¶ His goode Steede / al he bystrood

And forth vp on his wey he glood

As Sparcle / out of the bronde

2095

¶ Vp on his Creest he bar a tour

And ther Inne stiked / a lilie flour

God shilde / his cors fro shonde

2098

¶ And for he was / a knyght auntrous

He nolde slepen / in noon hous

But liggen in his hode

2101

His brighte helm / was his wonger

And by hym / bayteth his destrer

Of herbes / fyne and goode

2104

¶ Hym self / drank water of the well

As dide the knyght Sire PercyueH

So worly vnder wede

Til on a day

2108

¶ Here the hoost/ stynteth Chaucer of his tale of
Thopas / and biddeth hym / telle another tale.

Namoore of this / for goddes dignytee
Quod oure Hoost^t for thow makest me
So wery / of thy verray lewednesse [leaf 215, back]
That also wisly / god my soule blesse 2112
Myne erys aken / of thy drasty speche
Now swich a rym / the deuel I biteche
This may wel be / rym dogerel quod he
¶ Why so quod I / why wiltow lette me 2116
Moore of my tale / than another man
Syn that it is / the beste rym I kan
¶ By god quod he / for pleyonly at o word
Thy drasty rymyng^t is nat worth a tord 2120
Thow doost noght ellis / but despendest tyme
Sire at o word / thow shalt no lenger ryme
Lat se / wher thow kanst tellen aught in geste
Or tel in Prose / som what at the leeste 2124
In which ther be som myrthe / or som doctrine
¶ Gladly quod I / by goddes swete pyne
I wol yow telle / a litel thyng in prose
That oghte like yow / as I suppose 2128
Or ellis certes / ye be to daungerous
It is a moral tale *vertuous*
Al be it toold som tyme in sondry wise
Of sondry folk / as I shal yow deuyse 2132
¶ As thus / ye woot þat euery Euaungelist
That telleth vs / the peyne of Ihesu Crist^t
Ne seith nat alle thyng^t as his felawe dooth
But natheles / hir sentence is al sooth 2136
And alle acorden / as in hir sentence
Al be ther / in hir tellyng difference

ffor *somme* of hem seyn moore / & *somme* seyn lesse
 Whan they / his pitous passion expresse 2140
 I mene / of Mark / Mathew / Luk^t and Iohn
 But doutelees / hir sentence is al oon
 ¶ Therfore / lordynges alle / I yow biseche
 If þat ye thynke / I varie / as in my speche 2144
 As thus / thogh þat I telle somewhat moore
 Of *prouerbes* / than ye han herd bfore
 Comprehended / in this litel tretys heere
 To enforcen with / theffect of my matere 2148
 And thogh I nat^t the same wordes seye
 As ye han herd / yet to yow alle I preye
 Blameth me nat / for as in my sentence [leaf 216]
 Shul ye / nowher / fynden difference 2152
 ffro the sentence / of this tretys lite
 After the which / this myry tale I write
 And therfore herkneth / what þat I shal seye
 And lat me tellen / al my tale I preye 2156

[There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrnwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines. || stands for a triangular pause-mark in the MS.]

[Hengwrt MS, on leaf 216.]

¶ Here bigynneth chaucers tale of Melibeus 𐄂

A [2157]
yong^r man whilom / called Melibeus myghty and riche /
bigat vp on his wif / þat called was Prudence / a
doghter / which þat called was Sophie ||

[2158] vp on a day bifel / þat he for his desport
is went in to the feeldes / hym to pleye / [2159] his wif
& eek his doghter / hath he laft inwith his hous / of
which the dores weren faste yshette / [2160] thre of his
olde foos / han it espied / & setten laddres / to the walles
of his hous / and by wyndowes ben entred / [2161] &
betten his wif / & wounded his doghter / with fyue
mortal woundes in fyue sondry places / [2162] this is to
seyn / in hir feet / in hir handes / in hir erys / in hir
nose / and in hir mouth / and leften hire for deed &
wenten away

[2163] Whan Melibeus retourned was in to his
hous / & seigh al this meschief / he lyk a mad man
rentynge his clothes / gan to wepe / and crye

[2164] Prudence his wyf / as ferforth as she dorste /
hisoughte hym / of his wepyng^r for to stynte / [2165] but nat
for-thy / he gan to crye & wepen euere lenger the moore

[2166] ¶ This noble wif Prudence remembred hire /
vp-on the sentence of Ouyde / in his book^r þat cleped is / the
remedie of loue / wher as he seith / [2167] he is a fool /
that destourbeth the moder / to wepe / in the deth of hir
child^r / til she haue wept^r hir fille / as for a certeyn tyme /
[2168] and thanne shal man doon his diligence with
amiable wordes / hire to reconforte / and preye hire / of

¶ Ouidius de
remedio amoris

[S] nece

hir wepyng for to stynte / [2169] for which reson / this
 noble wyf Prudence / suffred hir housbonde / for to wepe
 & crye / as for a certeyn space / [2170] and whan she
 say hir tyme / she seyde hym in this wise ¶ Allas my
 lord quod she / why make ye your self for to be lyk a
 fool / [2171] for sothe / it aperteneþ nat to a wys man /
 to maken swich a sorwe / [2172] yowre doghter / with
 the grace of god / shal warisshe and escape [2173] ¹And al
 were it so / þat she right now were deed / ye ne oghte
 nat as for hir deth / youre self destroye [2174] ¶ Seneca
 seith / the wise man shal nat take to greet discomfort for
 the deth of his children / [2175] but *certes* / he sholde
 suffren it in pacience / as wel / as he abideth the deth /
 of his owene propre persone

[¶] *qualiter*
Iesus christus
fleuit propter
mortem lazari.

¶ *Apostolus ad*
Romanos.

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus / answerde anon & seyde
 ¶ What man quod he / sholde of his wepyng stynte / that
 hath so gret a cause for to wepe || [2177] *Ihesu crist* /
 oure lord hym self / wepte / for the deth / of lazarus his
 freend [2178] ¶ Prudence answerde ¶ Certes wel I woot
 attempree wepyng / is no thyng defended / to hym þat
 sorweful is / amonges folk in sorwe / but it is rather / graunted
 hym to wepe [2179] ¶ The Apostle Poul / vn to the
 Romainys writeth || Man shal reioysse *with* hem þat maken
 ioye / and wepen / *with* swich folk as wepen || [2180] but
 thogh attempree wepyng be graunted / outrageous
 wepyng *certes* is defended || [2181] Mesure of wepyng
 sholde be considered / after the loore þat techeth vs Seneca
 [2182] ¶ Whan þat thy freend is deed quod he / lat nat
 thyne eyen / to moyste ben of terys / ne to muche drye / al
 thogh the teerys come to thyne eyen / lat hem nat falle /
 [2183] And whan thou hast forgoon thy freend / do dili-
 gence / to geten another freend / and this is moore wysdom /
 than for to wepe for thy freend / which þat thou hast lorn /
 for ther-Inne / is no boote / [2184] And ther-fore / if ye
 gouerne yow by sapience / put away sorwe / out of youre
 herte / [2185] ¶ Remembre yow / þat *Ihesus* Syrak seith ||

A man þat is ioyous and glad in herte / it hym conserueth florisschyng in his age / but soothly / sorweful herte / maketh his bones drye || [2186] He seith eek thus / þat sorwe in herte / sleeth ful many a man || [2187] Salomon seith / that right as Moththes in the Shepes flees / anoyeth to the clothes / and the smale wormes to the tree / right so anoyeth sorwe to the herte / [2188] wherfore / vs oghte as wel in the deth of oure children / as in the losse of oure goodes temporels / haue pacience ||

[2189] Remembre yow / vp on the pacient Iob / whan he hadde lost his children / and his temporel substance and in his body endured & receyued ful many a greuous tribulacion / yet seide he thus || [2190] Oure lord / hath [sente it me / oure lord hath] biraft it me / right so as oure lord hath wold / right so it is doon / yblessed be / the name of oure lord [2191] ¶ To this forseide thynges / answerde Melibeus / vn to his wif Prudence || Alle thy wordes quod he been sothe / & ther to profitable / but trewely / myn herte is troubled with this sorwe / so greuously þat I noot what to doon [2192] ¶ lat calle quod Prudence / thy trewe freendes alle / & thy lynage / whiche þat ¹ben wise / telleth youre cas / & herkneth what they seye in conseylynge / & yow gouerne / after hir sentence [2193] ¶ Salomon seith / Werk alle thy thynges by conseil / & thow shalt neuere repente //

[2194] Thanne by the conseil of his wyf Prudence / this Melibeus leet callen a greet congregacion of folk / [2195] as Sirurgiens / Phisiciens / olde folk and yonge / & somme of hise olde enemys reconciled / as by hir semblant to his loue / & in to his grace / [2196] And ther-with-al / þer coomen somme of hise neghebores / þat diden hym reuerence / moore for drede than for loue / as it happeth ofte || [2197] ¶ Ther coomen also / ful manye subtile flaterers / and wise Aduocatz lerned in the lawe /

[2198] And whan this folk / togydre assembled weren / this Melibeus in sorweful wise / shewed hem his cas /

[2199] and by the manere of his speche / it semed
 þat in herte / he baar a cruel Ire / redy to doon vengeance
 vp on his foos / and sodeynly desired / þat the
 werre sholde bigynne / [2200] but nathelees / yet axed he
 hir conseil vp on this matere || [2201] A Sirurgien / by
 licence and assent^t of swiche as were wise / vp roos / & vn
 to Melibeus / seyde as ye may heere

[2202] ¶ Sire quod he / as to vs Sirurgiens aperteneth
 that we do to euery wight / the beste þat we kan / where as
 we be withholden / and to oure pacientz / þat we do no
 damage / [2203] wher fore / it happeth many tyme & ofte /
 þat whan twey men han euerich wounded oother / o
 same Sirurgien heeeth hem bothe / [2204] wherfore vn to
 oure Art^t it is nat pertinent^t to norice werre / ne parties
 to supporte / [2205] but certes / as to the warisschyng of
 youre doghter / al be it so / þat she perilously be
 wounded / we shullen do so ententif bisynesse fro day to
 nyght^t þat with the grace of god / she shal be hool &
 sound / as soone as is possible [2206] ¶ Almoost^t right
 in the same wise / the Phisiciens answerden / saue þat
 they seyden / a fewe wordes moore || [2207] that right
 as maladyes ben cured by hir contraries / right so shal
 man warisshe werre by vengeance [2208] ¶ hise neghe-
 bores ful of enuye / hise feyned freendes / þat semeden
 reconciled / hise flaterers [2209] maden semblant
 of wepyng^t. and empeyred / & aggregated muchel of this
 matere / in preisynge gretly Melibe / of myght^t of power /
 of richesse / & of freendes / despisyng / the power of hise
 Aduersaries / [2210] and seyden outrelly / þat he anon /
 sholde wreke hym on hise foos / and bigynne werre

[2211] ¶ Vp roos thanne an Aduocat þat was wys /
 by leue & by conseil / of othere þat weren wise / and seyde ||
 [2212] Lordynges / the nede. for the which we ben assembled
 in this place / is ful heuy thyng^t and an ¹heigh matere /
 [2213] by cause of the wrong^t & of the wikkednesse / that
 hath be doon / and eek by reson of the grete damages / þat

in tyme comynge been possible to fallen / for the samé
 cause / [2214] And ek by reson / of the grete richesse &
 power of the parties bothe / [2215] for the whiche resons /
 it were a ful greet peril to erren in this matere [2216]
 ¶ wherfore Melibeus / this is oure sentence || we conseil
 yow abouen alle thyng^t. þat right anon thow do
 diligence in kepyng of thy propre persone / in swich a
 wise / þat thow ne wante noon espye / ne wacche / thy body
 for to saue [2217] ¶ And after þat we conseil / þat in
 thyn hous / thow sette suffisant garnyson / so þat they may
 as wel / thy body / as thyn hous defende [2218] ¶ But certes /
 for to moeue werre / ne sodeynly for to doon vengeance /
 we may nat deme in so litel tyme / þat it were profit-
 able / [2219] Wherfore / we axen leyser & espace / to haue
 deliberaciō in this cas to deme / [2220] for the commune
 prouerbe seyth this / he þat soone demeth / soone shal
 repente [2221] ¶ And eek men seyn / þat thilke Iuge is
 wys / þat soone vnderstondeth a matere / & Iuggeth by
 leyser / [2222] for al be it so þat al taryng^t be anoyful /
 algates it is nat to repreue / in yeuyng of Iuggement^t / ne in
 vengeance takyng^t. whan it is suffisant and resonable /
 [2223] and that shewed oure lord Ihesu crist by en-
 sample / for whan þat the womman þat was taken in
 auoutrye / was broght in his presence / to knowen / what
 sholde be doon with hir persone / al be it þat he wiste
 wel hym self / what þat he wolde answe^r / yet ne wolde he /
 nat answe^r sodeynly / but he wolde haue deliberaciō / and
 in the ground / he wroot twies / [2224] and by thise
 causes / we axen deliberacion / and we shul thanne / by
 the grace of god conseil thee / thyng^t that shal be
 profitable /

[2225] ¶ Vp stirten thanne / the yonge folk atones / and
 the mooste partie of that campaigne / han scorned / this olde
 wise man / and bigonnen to make noyse / & seyden / that
 [2226] right so / as whil þat Iren is hoot^t men sholde
 smyte^s right so sholde men / wreken hir wronges / whil

þat they been / fresshe & newe / and with loud voyz / they
criden. Werre. werre ||

[2227] Vp roos tho. oon of thise olde wise / &
with his hand made contenance / þat men sholde
holden hem stille / and yeuen hym audience [2228]
¶ Lordynges quod he / ther is ful many a man þat
crieth werre. werre. þat woot ful litel / what werre
amounteth || [2229] Werre at his bigynnyng^t hath so greet
an entree & so large ¹þat euery wight^t may entre
whan hym liketh / & lightly fynde werre || [2230] But
certes what ende / þat ther-of shal falle / it is noght light
to knowe || [2231] for soothly / whan þat werre is ones
bigonne / ther is ful many a child / vuborn of his moder /
þat shal sterue yong^t by cause of thilke werre / or ellis
lyue in sorwe / & dye in wrecchednesse / [2232] and
ther fore / er þat any werre be bigonne / men moste haue
gret^t conseil / & gret deliberacion [2233] ¶ And whan
this olde man / wende to enforen his tale by resons /
wel neigh alle atones / bigonne they to rise / for to breken his
tale / and beden hym ful ofte / hise wordes for to abregge /
[2234] for sothly / he þat precheth to hem / þat listen
nat heren hise wordes / hys sarmon / hem anoyeth || [2235]
ffor Ihesus Syrak^t seith /. That Musyk^t in wepynge / is
a-noyous thyng^t This is to seyn / As muche auailleth / to
speken biforn folk^t to whiche his speche anoyeth / as it is /
to synge biforn hym þat wepeth || [2236] And whan this wise
man say þat hym wanted audience / al shamefast^t
he sette hym down agayn || [2237] ffor Salomon seith / ther
as thow / ne mayst haue non audience / enforcee thee nat
to speke [2238] ¶ I se wel quod this wise man / þat the
commune prouerbe is sooth || that good conseil wanteth /
whan it is moost nede //

[2239] Yet hadde this Melibeus / in his conseil many
folk / þat priuely in his ere / conseiled hym certeyn thyng^t.
and conseiled hym the contrarie / in general audience

[2240] ¶ Whan Melibeus hadde herd / þat the gretteste

party of his conseil / were acorded / þat he sholde make
 werre / anon he consented / to hir conseilyng^t & fully
 affermed hir sentence / [2241] ¶ Thanne dame Prudence /
 whan þat she say / how þat hyr housbonde / shoope hym /
 for to wreke hym on his foos / & to bigynne werre / she
 in ful humble wise / whan she say hir tyme / seyde
 hym thise wordes [2242] ¶ My lord quod she / I you
 biseche / as hertely as I dar & kan / ne haste yow nat to
 faste / and for alle gerdons / as yif me audience ||
 [2243] ffor Piers Alfonce seith / who so þat dooth to
 thee / outhur good / or harm / haste thee nat to quiten it / for
 in this wise / thy freend wol abyde / and thyn enemy / shal
 the lenger lyue in drede || [2244] The *proverbe* seith / he
 hasteth wel / þat wysly kan abide / and in wikked haste /
 is no profit

[2245] ¶ This Melibe / answerde vn to his wyf Prudence ||
 I purpose nat quod he / to werken by thy conseil / for
 many causes and resons / ffor certes euery wight wolde
 holde me thanne a fool / [2246] this is to seyn / If I
 for thy conseilyng^t wolde chaunge ¹thynges þat ben
 ordeyned / & affermed / by so manye wise [2247] ¶ Sec-
 oundly I seye / þat alle wommen ben wikke / and noon
 good of hem alle / for of a thousand men / seith Salomon /
 I foond o good man / but *certes* of alle wommen / good
 womman foond I neuere [2248] ¶ And also *certes* / if I
 gouerned me by thy conseil / it sholde seme / þat I hadde
 yeue to thee ouer me the maistrie / and goddes forbode / þat
 it so were / [2249] ffor Ihesus Syrak seith / that if the
 wyf haue maistrie / she is contrarious / to hir housbonde
 [2250] ¶ And Salomon seith / Neuere in thy lyf / to thy
 wyf / ne to thy child / ne to thy freend / ne yif no power
 ouer thy self / ffor bettre it were / þat thy children axen
 of thy persone thynges þat hem nedeth / than thow see
 thy self in the handes of thy children [2251] ¶ And also /
 if I wolde werke by thy conseilyng^t *certes* my conseil /
 moste som tyme be secree / til it were tyme / þat it moste be

knowe / and this ne may nat be [2252. *Car il est escript: la jenglerie des femmes ne puet riens céler fors ce qu'elle ne sct.* [2253] *Après, le philosophe dit: en maurais conseil les femmes vainquent les hommes. Pour ces raisons je ne doy point user de ton conseil.* MS of the first half of the 15th century in 'Le Ménagier de Paris,' i. 193, ed. 1846.]

[2254] ¶ Whan dame Prudence ful debonairly & with gret pacience hadde herd / al that hir housbonde liked for to seye / thanne axed she of hym / licence for to speke / and seyde in this wise [2255] ¶ My lord quod she / as to youre firste reson / certes it may lightly been answered / for I seye þat it is no folie to chaunge conseil / whan the thyng is chaunged / or ellis / whan the thyng semeth oother weys / than it was biforn [2256] ¶ And moore ouer I seye / þat thogh þat ye han sworn & bihight to parfourne youre emprise / & nathelees ye weyue to parfourne thilke same emprise by iuste cause / men sholde nat seyn therfore þat ye were a lyere / ne forsworn / [2257] for the book seith / þat the wise man / maketh no lesyng when he turneth his corage to the bettre / [2258] And al be it so / þat youre emprise be establissed & ordeyned / by gret multitude of folk / yet thar ye nat accomplice thilke same ordinance / but yow like / [2259] for the trouthe of thynges & the profit ben rather founde in fewe folk / þat ben wise & ful of reson / than by gret multitude of folk || ther euery man crieth & clatereth what þat hym liketh / soothly swich multitude / is nat honeste [2260] ¶ And to the seconde resoñ / where as ye seyn / þat alle wommen ben wikke / saue youre grace / certes ye despise alle wommen in this wyse / and he þat al despiseth / al displeseth / as seith the book. [2261] and Senec seith / that who so wole haue Sapience / shal no man dispreise / but he shal gladly teche / the science þat he kan / withoute presumpcion or pride / [2262] and swiche thynges / as he nocht ne kan / he shal nat ben ashamed to lerne hem & enquire ¹ of lasse

folk than hym self [2263] ¶ And sire / þat ther hath
 be ful many a good womman / may lightly be preued /
 [2264] for *certes* sire / oure lord Ihesu crist wolde
 neuere han descended / to be born of a womman / if alle
 wommen hadde be wikke / [2265] And after that for
 the grete bountee þat is in wommen / oure lord Ihesu crist
 whan he was risen fro deth to lyf / appered rather to a
 womman / than to his apostles / [2266] And though
 þat Salomon seith / þat he ne foond neuere womman
 good / it folweth nat therfore / þat alle wommen ben
 wikke / [2267] for thogh þat he ne foond no good
 womman / *certes* many another man / hath founde
 many a womman ful good and trewe || [2268] Or ellis
per auenture / the entente of Salomon / was this / þat as in
souereyn bountee / he foond no womman / [2269] this is to
 seyn / þat ther is no wight þat hath *souereyn bountee* /
 saue god allone / as he hym self recordeth / in his *Euaun-*
gelie / [2270] for ther nys no creature so good / þat hym
 ne wanteth som what of the *perfeccioñ* of god / þat is his
 makere [2271] ¶ Your thridde reson is this / ye seyn / þat if
 ye gouerne yow by my conseil / it sholde seme / þat ye
 hadde yeue me the maistrie and the lordshipe / ouer youre
 persone [2272] Sire sauf youre *grace* / it is nat so / for
 if so were / þat no man sholde be conseiled / but oonly
 of hem / þat hadde lordshipe & maistrie of his persone /
 men wolde nat ben conseiled so ofte / [2273] for soothly
 thilke man þat axeþ conseil of a purpos / yet hath he
 free choys / wheither he wole werke by that conseil / or
 noon [2274] ¶ And as to youre ferþe reson / ther ye
 seyn þat the Ianglerye of wommen / kan hide thynges that
 they woot nat / as who seith / þat a womman kan nat
 hide that þat she woot. [2275] Sire thise wordes been
 vnderstonde of wommen þat ben Iangleresses & wikked /
 [2276] of whiche wommen men seyn / þat thre thynges /
 dryuen a man out of his hous / that is to seyn / Smoke /
 droppying of reyn / & wikked wyues / [2277] and

of swiche wommen seith Salomon / þat it were bettre dwellen
 in desert than with a womman þat is riotous / [2278] and
 sire by youre leue / þat am nat .I. / [2279] for ye han ful
 ofte assayed / my grete silence & my grete pacience / and
 eek how wel þat I kan hiden & hele thynges / þat
 men oghten secrely to hyde [2280] ¶ And soothly / as to
 youre fifthe reson / wher as ye seyn / þat in wikked con-
 seil / wommen venquysse men / god woot thilke reson /
 stant heere in no stede || [2281] ffor vnderstond now / ye
 axen conseil / to do wikkednesse / [2282] and if ye wol
 werke wikkednesse / and youre wyf restreyneþ þilke
 wikked ¹purpos / & ouercometh yow by reson and by
 good conseil / [2283] certes youre wyf oghte rather be
 preysed / than yblamed || [2284] Thus sholde ye vnder-
 stonde the Philosophre / þat seith / In wikked conseil /
 wommen venquyssen hir housbondes [2285] ¶ And ther
 as ye blamen alle wommen / & hir resons / I shal shewe
 by manye ensamples / þat many a womman hath
 be ful good / and yet ben / & hir conseils holsom
 & profitable [2286] ¶ Eke som men han seyð / þat the
 conseilyng of wommen / is outhere to deere / or ellis to
 litel of prys || [2287] but al be it so / þat ful many a
 womman is badde / & hir conseil vile & noght worth /
 yet han men founde / ful many a good womman & ful
 discrete & wys in conseilynge [2288] ¶ Lo Iacob / by
 conseil of his moder Rebekka / wan the beneyson of
 Ysaak his fader / and the lordshipe ouer alle his bretheren
 [2289] ¶ Iudith by hir good conseil / deliuered the Citee of
 Bethulye in which she dwelled / out of þe handes of
 Olofernus þat hadde it biseged / & wolde it al destroye
 [2290] ¶ Abigail / deliuered Nabal hir housbonde / fro
 Daud the kyng þat wolde han slayn hym / & apaised
 the Ire of the kyng by hir wit & by hir good conseil-
 yng [2291] ¶ Hester by hir good conseil / enhauned
 gretly the peple of god in the regne of Assuerus the kyng.
 [2292] And the same bountee in good conseilyng of

many a good womman / may men telle [2293] ¶ And moore
ouer / whan þat oure lord / hadde creat Adam oure forme
fader / he seyde in this wise / [2294] It is nat goode to be / a
man allone / make we to hym an help / semblable to hym
self / [2295] ¶ Heere may ye se / þat if þat wommen
were nat goode / & hir conseil / good & profitable /
[2296] oure lord god of heuene / wolde neither han wrought
hem / ne called hem help of man / but rather / confusion of
man || [2297] And ther seyde ones a clerk¹ in two vers
¹¶ What is bettre than gold / Iaspres / What is bettre than
Iaspres / wisdom || [2298] And what is bettre than
wisdom / Womman / and what is bettre than good
Womman / no thyng [2299] ¶ And sire / by manye of othere
resons may ye seen / þat manye wommen ben goode /
& hir conseil good & profitable: [2300] And ther fore
sire / if ye wol truste to my conseil / I shal restore yow
youre doghter / hool & sound / [2301] and eek / I wol doon
to yow so muche / þat ye shul haue honour in this cause:

[2302] ¶ Whan Melibe hadde herd the wordes / of his
wyf Prudence / he seyde thus [2303] ¶ I se wel / þat the
word of Salomon / is sooth ||. he seith / þat wordes þat
ben spoken discretly by ordinance / beth honycombes /
for they yeue swetnesse to the soule / & holsomnesse
to the body || [2304] And wyf / by cause of the swete
²wordes / and eek¹ for I haue assayed & preued / thy grete
sapience & thy grete trouthe / I wol gouerne me by thy
conseil / in alle thyng¹

[2305] ¶ Now sire / quod dame Prudence / and syn ye
vouche sauf / to been gouerned by my conseil / I wol
enforme yow / how ye shal gouerne yow self / in chesyng
of youre conseilours [2306] ¶ Ye shal first in alle youre
werkes / mekely biseken to the heighe god / þat he wol
be youre conseilour / [2307] & shapeth yow to swich
entente / þat he yeue yow conseil / & confort¹ as taughte
Thobie his sone || [2308] At alle tymes / thow shalt blesse

[¹ Note at bottom of leaf 219:—Auro quid melius. / iaspis? quid iaspis. sensus.
Sensu quid. / Mulier? quid Muliere. / nichil:

god & praye hym to dresse thy weyes / and looke þat
 alle thy conseils ben in hym for euere moore [2309] ¶ Seint
 Iame eek seith || If any of yow / haue nede of Sapience / axe
 it of god / [2310] and afterward thanne shal ye take
 conseil in your self / & examyne wel youre thoghtes / of
 swiche thynges as yow thynketh / þat is best for youre profit
 [2311] and thanne shal ye dryue fro youre herte / thre
 thynges / that been contrarious to good conseil / [2312]
 that is to seyn / Ire / Coueitise / & hastynesse

[2313] ¶ ffirst he þat axeth conseil of hym self / *certes*
 he moste be with-uten Ire / for many causes [2314]
 ¶ The firste is this || he þat hath greet Ire & wrahte in
 hym self / he weneth alwey þat he may do thyng þat he
 may nat do || [2315] And secoundly / he þat is Irous
 & wroþ / he ne may nat wel deme / [2316] and he
 þat may nat wel deme / may nat wel conseille || [2317] The
 thridde is this / that he þat is Irous & wroþ as seith
 Senek^t ne may nat speke / but blameful thynges / [2318]
 and with hise viciouse wordes / he stireth oother folk to
 angre / & to Ire // [2319] And eek sire / ye moste dryue
 coueitise / out of youre herte / [2320] ffor the Apostle seith /
 þat Coueitise / is the roote of alle harmes / [2321] and trust
 wel / þat a coueitous man ne kan nat deme / ne thenke /
 but oonly to fulfille the ende of his coueitise / [2322] &
certes / that ne may neuere been acompliced / for euere
 the moore habundance þat he hath of richesse / the moore
 he desireth [2323] ¶ And sire / ye moste also / dryue out
 of youre herte / hastifnesse / for *certes* [2324] ye may
 nat deme for þe beste / a sodeyn thought þat falleth in
 youre herte / but ye moste auyse yow on it ful ofte
 [2325] for as ye herde her biforn / the *commune* prouerbe is
 this / that he / þat soone demeth / soone repenteth

[2326] Sire ye ne ben nat alwey / in lyke disposicioñ /
 [2327] for *certes* / som thyng þat som tyme semeth to
 yow / þat it is good for to do / another tyme / it semeth
 to yow the contrarie /

[2328] whan ye han taken conseil in your self / and
 han demed by good deliberaciō / swich thyng / as yow
 semeth best [2329] ¶ Thanne rede I yow / þat ye kepe it
 secree / [2330] biwrey nat youre conseil / to no persone /
 but if so be þat ye wenen ¹sikerly / þat thurgh yowre
 bywreying^t youre condiciōn shal ben to yow moore
 profitable || [2331] ffor Ihesus Syrak seith || Neither to thy
 foo ne to thy freend / discouere nat thy secree / ne thy folie /
 [2332] for they wol yeue yow audience / & lokyng^t &
 supportaciō in thy presence / & scorne thee in thyn
 absence [2333] ¶ Another clerk seith / þat scarsly shaltow
 fynden any persone / þat may kepe conseil secretly
 [2334] ¶ The book seith / whil þat thow kepest thy conseil
 in thyn herte / thow kepest it in thy prison / [2335] And
 whan thow biwreyst thy conseil to any wight^t he holdeth
 thee in his snare / [2336] And therefore yow is bettre
 to hide youre conseil in youre herte / than preyen hym / to
 whom ye haue biwreied youre conseil / þat he wol kepen
 it cloos & stille [2337] ¶ ffor Seneca seith / If so be /
 þat thou ne mayst nat thyn owene conseil hyde / how
 dorstow preyen any oother wight^t. thy conseil secretly
 kepe || [2338] But nathelees / if thow wene sikerly / þat
 thy biwreying^t of thy conseil to a persone / wol maken thy
 condiciōn / to stonden in the bettre plyt^t thanne shaltow
 telle hym thy conseil / in this wise [2339] ¶ ffirst thow
 shalt make no semblant / wheither thee were leuere / pees or
 werre / or this / or that / ne shewe hym nat thy wyl &
 thyn entente / [2340] for trust wel þat comunely / thise
 conseillours ben flaterers / [2341] namely / the conseillours
 of grete lordes / [2342] for they enforcen hem alwey /
 rather to speke plesante wordes / enclynyng to the lordes
 lust^t than wordes þat ben trewe / or profitable / [2343] And
 therefore men seyn / þat the riche man hath selde good con-
 seil / but if he haue it of hym self / [2344] And after that
 thow shalt considere thy freendes / & thyne enemys /
 [2345] And as touchyng thy freendes / thow shalt con-

sidere / whiche of hem þat been moost feithfulle / & moost
wise / & eldest & moost approued in conceillyng
[2346] and of hem / shaltow axe thy conseil / as the
cas requyreth

[2347] ¶ I seye / þat first ye shul clepe to youre con-
seyl / youre freendes / þat ben trewe || [2348] ffor Salomon
seith / þat right as the herte of a man / deliteth in sauour
þat is soote: right so the conseil of trewe freendes /
yeueth swetnesse to the soule / [2349] ¶ He seith also / ther
may no thyng be likned to the trewe freend / [2350] for
certes / gold ne siluer / ben noght so muche worth / as the
goode wyl / of a trewe freend || [2351] And eek he seith /
þat a trewe freend is a strong defense / who so þat
it fyndeth / certes he fyndeth a gret tresor
[2352] ¶ Thanne shul ye eek considere / if þat youre
trewe freendes been discrete & wise / for the book
seith || Axe alwey thy conseil / of hem þat been wise /
[2353] And by this same 'reson / shul ye clepen to youre
conseil / of yowre freendes / þat ben of age / swiche as han
seighen / & ben expert of manye thynges / & ben
approued in conceilynges / [2354] ffor the book seip /
þat in olde men is the sapience / and in longe tyme
the prudence [2355] ¶ And Tullius seith / þat grete
thynges / ne ben nat ay acomplised by strengthe / ne by
delyuernesse of body / but by good conseil / by Auctoritee
of persones / & by Science / the whiche thre thynges / ne
been nat fieble by age / but certes they enforcen / and en-
cressen day by day [2356] And thanne shal ye kepe
this / for a general rule || ffirst shal ye clepe to youre
conseil / a fewe of youre freendes / þat ben especiale ||
[2357] ffor Salomon seith / manye freendes / haue thow /
but among a thousand / chees thee oon / to be thy conseil-
lour / [2358] for al be it so / þat thow first ne telle thy
conseil / but to a fewe / thow mayst afterward telle it to
mo folk if it be nede / [2359] but looke alwey þat thy
conseillours haue thilke thre condicions / þat I haue seyd

bifore / that is to seye / þat they be trewe / wise / and
 of old experience / [2360] And werk nat alwey in euery
 nede / by o conseilour allone / for som tyme bihoueth
 it to be conseyled by manye / [2361] for Salomon seith /
 Saluacion of thynges / is wher as ther ben manye
 conseilours

[2362] ¶ Now sith þat I haue told yow / of which folk
 ye sholde be conseyled / now wol I teche yow / which
 conseil ye oghte eschue [2363] ¶ ffirste ye shul eschue /
 the conseillyng of fooles / for Salomon seith / take no con-
 seil of a fool / for he ne kan nat conseyll / but after his
 owene lust and his affeccioñ / [2364] ¶ The book seith /
 that the propretee of a fool is this || he troweþ lightly /
 harm of euery wight & lightly troweth alle bountee in
 hym self // [2365] Tow shalt eek eschue / the conseillyng
 of alle flaterers / swiche as enforcen hem rather to preise
 youre persone by flaterye / than for to telle yow the sooth-
 fastnesse of thynges

[2366] ¶ Wherefore Tullius seith / Among alle the
 pestilences þat been in frendshipe / the gretteste is
 flaterye / And therefore is it moore nede / þat thow eschue
 & drede flaterers / than any oother peple || [2367] The
 book seith / thow shalt rather drede & flee fro the
 swete wordes / of flaterynge preiseres / than fro the egre
 wordes of thy freend / that seith thee thy sothes [2368]
 ¶ Salomon seith / that the wordes of a flaterere / is a Snare
 to cacchen Innocentz || [2369] He seith also / þat he þat
 speketh to his freend / wordes of swetnesse / and of
 'plesance / setteth a Net biforn his feet to cacchen hym ||
 [2370] And therefore / seith Tullius || Enelyne nat thyne
 erys to flatereres / ne tak no conseil / of wordes of
 flaterye [2371] ¶ And Caton seith || Auyse thee wel / &
 eschue wordes of swetnesse & of plesance
 [2372] ¶ And eek thow shalt eschue / the conseillyng of
 thynne olde enemys þat ben reconsiled || [2373] The
 book seith / that no wight retourneth sauflly in to the

grace of his olde enemy || [2374] And Ysope seith / Ne
 trust nat to hem / to whiche / thow hast had som tyme werre /
 or enemytee / ne telle hem nat thy conseil || [2375] And
 Seneca / telleth the cause why || It may nat be seith he /
 that where as greet fyr / hath longe tyme endured / þat
 ther ne dwelleth som vapour of warmnesse || [2376] And
 ther fore seith Salomon || In thyn olde foo / trust neuere /
 [2377] for sikerly / thogh thyn enemy be reconsiled /
 & maketh thee / cheere of humylitee / & louteth to thee
 with his heed / ne trust hym neuere / [2378] for certes /
 he maketh thilke feyned humylitee / moore for his profit
 than for any loue of thy persone / by cause þat he dem-
 eth / to haue victorie ouer thy persone / by swich feyned
 continance / the which victorie / he myghte nat haue / by
 strif or werre [2379] ¶ And Peter Alfonce seith || Make no
 felaweshipe / with thyne olde enemys / for if thow do hem
 bountee / they wol peruerten it in to wikkednesse
 [2380] ¶ And eek thou most eschue / the conseillyng of hem
 þat ben thy seruantz / & beren thee gret reuerence / for
 perauenture / they seyn it moore / for drede than for loue /
 [2381] & therfore / seith a Philosophre / in this
 wise || Ther is no wight perfity trewe / to hym / þat he to
 soore dredeth || [2382] And Tullius seith / Ther nys no
 myght so gret / of any Emperour / þat longe may endure /
 but if he haue moore loue of the peple than drede
 [2383] ¶ Thou shalt also eschue the conseillyng of folk
 þat ben dronkelewe || for they ne kan no conseil hyde ||
 [2384] ffor Salomon seith / Ther is no priuete / ther as
 regneth dronkenesse [2385] ¶ Ye shal also han in suspect
 the conseillyng of swich folk as conseile yow a thyng
 priuely / & conseile yow / the contrarie openly || [2386]
 ffor Cassiodorie seith / That it is a manere sleighte to
 hyndre / whan he sheweth to doon a thyng openly / and
 werketh pryuely the contrarie [2387] ¶ Thow shalt also
 haue in suspect the conseillyng of wikked folk || ffor the
 book seith / The conseillyng of wikked folk is alwey ful

of fraude || [2388] And Daud seith || Blisful is that man /
 þat hath nat folwed the conseilyng of sherewes [2389]
 ¶ Thow shalt also eschue ¹the conseilyng^t of yong folk /
 for hir conseil is nat rype

[2390] ¶ Now sire / sith I haue shewed yow / of which
 folk^t ye shul take youre conseil / and of which folk^t ye schul
 folwe the conseil ||. [2391] now wol I teche yow / how ye
 shul examyne youre conseil / after the doctrine of Tullius
 [2392] ¶ In the examynynge thanne of youre conseilour /
 ye shul considere many thynges // [2393] Alderfirst / thou
 shalt considere / þat in thilke thyng^t þat thow purposest^t /
 & vp on what thyng^t thow wolt haue conseil / þat verray
 trouthe / be seyð & conserued / this is to seyn / telle
 trewely thy tale / [2394] for he þat seith fals / may nat
 wel be conseiled / in that cas / of which he lyeth [2395]
 ¶ And after this / thow shalt considere / the thynges þat
 acorden / to that thow purposest for to do / by thy conseil-
 lours / if reson acorde ther to / [2396] and eek^t if thy
 myght^t may atteyne ther to / and if the moore part^t & the
 bettre part^t of thy conseilours / acorde ther to / or no
 [2397] ¶ Thanne shaltow considere / what thyng shal
 folwe of that conseilyng^t as hate / pees / werre /
 grace / profit^t or damage / & many othere thynges /
 [2398] And in alle thise thynges / thow shalt chese the
 beste / and weyue alle othere thynges [2399] ¶ Thanne
 shaltow considere / of what roote is engendred the matere
 of thy conseil / and what fruyt it may conceyue &
 engendre [2400] ¶ Thow shalt eek considere alle thise
 causes / from whennes they ben sprongen || [2401] And
 whan ye haue examyned youre conseil / as I haue seyð /
 & which partie is the bettre & moore profitable / &
 han approued it / by manye wise folk^t & olde^t [2402]
 thanne shaltow considere / if thou mayst parforme it / &
 maken of it a good ende [2403] ¶ ffor reson wol nat^t
 þat any man sholde bigynne a thyng^t. but if he myghte
 parforme it / as hym oghte || [2404] Ne no wight sholde

take vp on hym so heuy charge / þat he myghte nat beren
 it || [2405] ffor the prouerbe seith /. he þat to muche
 embraceth / destreyneth litel || [2406] And Caton seith /
 Assay to do swich thyng^t as thow hast power to doon /
 lest þat the charge / oppresse thee so soore / þat thee
 bihoueth / to weyue thyng^t þat thow hast bigonne ||
 [2407] And if so be / þat thow be in doute / wheither thow
 mayst parfourne a thyng / or noon^t : chees rather to suffre /
 than bigynne / [2408] || And Peter Alfonce seith ¶ If
 thow hast myght to doon a thyng^t of which thow most
 repente / it is bettre / nay / than ye / [2409] this is
 to seyn / þat thee is bettre / to holde thy tonge stille / than
 for to speke [2410] ¶ Thanne may ye vnderstonde by
 strengre resons / þat if thow hast power / to 'parforme a
 werk^t of which thow shalt repente / thanne is it bettre
 þat thow suffre / than bigynne || [2411] wel seyn they / þat
 defenden euery wight^t to assaye / a thyng^t of which he is
 in doute / wheither he may parforme it^t or no [2412]
 ¶ And after / whan ye haue examyned youre conseil / as I
 haue seyð biforn / & knowen wel þat ye may par-
 forme youre emprise / conferme it thanne sadly / til it be at
 an ende

[2413] ¶ Now it is resoñ and tyme / þat I shewe yow /
 whanne & wherfore / þat ye may chaunge youre conseil-
 lours / with oute youre reproue || [2414] Soothly / man
 may chaungen his purpos / and his conseil / if the cause
 cesseth / or whan a newe cas bitideth || [2415] for the
 lawe seith / þat vpon thynges / þat newly bitideth / bihoueth
 newe conseil [2416] ¶ And Seneca seith || If thy conseil
 is come / to the erys of thyn enemy / chaunge thy conseil
 [2417] ¶ Thow mayst also chaunge thy conseil / if so be
 þat thou fynde þat by errour / or by oother cause /
 harm / or damage / may bityde [2418] ¶ Also / if thy
 conseil be deshoneste / or ellis cometh of deshoneste cause /
 chaunge thy conseil || [2419] for the lawes seyn / that
 alle bihestes / þat ben deshoneste / ben of no value /

[2420] And eek if it so be / þat it be impossible / or may
nat goodly be performed / or kept^t ||

[2421] And take this / for a general rule || That euery
conseil / þat is affermed so strongly / þat it may nat be
chaunged / for no condicion / þat may bityde / .I seye that
thilke conseil is wikked

[2422] ¶ This Melibeus / whan he hadde herd / the doc-
trine of his wyf / Dame Prudence / answerde in this wise
[2423] ¶ Dame quod he / as yet in to this tyme / ye
han wel & couenably taught me / as in general / how I
shal gouerne me / in chesyng / & in the withholdyng^t
of my conseilours || [2424] But now wolde I fayn / þat
ye wolde condescenden in especial / [2425] & telle me
how liketh yow / or what semeth yow / by oure conseilours /
þat we han chosen in oure present nede

[2426] My lord quod she / I biseke yow / in al hum-
blesse / þat ye wol nat wilfully / replye ayein my resons /
ne distempre youre herte / thogh I speke thyng^t þat
yow displese / [2427] for god woot þat as in myn entente /
I speke it for youre beste / for youre honour / & for youre
profit eke / [2428] And soothly I hope / þat youre be-
nygnytee / wol taken it in pacience [2429] ¶ Trusteth me
wel quod she / þat youre conseil / as in this cas / ne sholde
nat as to speke proprely / be called a conseilyng^t but a
mocioñ or a moeuyn of folie / [2430] in which conseil /
ye han erred / in many a sondry wise

[2431] ¶ ffirst & forward / ye han erred / in the assem-
blyng^t of youre conseilours / [2432] for ye sholde first
han clepid a ¹fewe folk / to youre conseil / and after / ye
myghte han shewed it to mo folk^t if it hadde be nede
[2433] ¶ But certes / ye han sodeynly clepid to youre con-
seil / a gret multitude of peple / ful chargeant / & ful
anoyous for to heere [2434] ¶ Also ye han erred / for
ther as ye sholde oonly / han clepid to youre conseil /
youre trewe freendes / olde / & wise / [2435] ye han yclepid
straunge folk^t. yong folk^t / false flatereres / & enemys

reconsiled / & folk/ þat doon yow reuerence withouten
loue [2436] ¶ And eek also / ye han erred / for ye han
brought *with* yow / to youre conseil./ Ire / Coueitise / &
hastifnesse /. [2437] the whiche thre thynges / ben contra-
riouse / to euery conseil honeste / & profitable /. [2438] the
whiche thre thynges / ye han nat anientissed / or destroyed
hem / neither in youre self^t ne in youre conseilours / as ye
oghte / || [2439] ¶ Ye han erred also / for ye han shewed to
youre conseilours / youre talent^t & youre affeccioñ / to
make werre anon / & for to do vengeance / [2440] they han
espied by youre wordes / to what thyng^t ye ben enclyned ||
[2441] And ther-fore / han they conseilled yow / rather / to
youre talent^t than to youre profit^t [2442] ¶ Ye han erred
also / for it semeth / þat yow suffiseth / to han ben con-
seilled / by thise conseilours oonly / & with litel auys /
[2443] wher as in so gret^t & so heigh a nede / it hadde
ben necessarie / mo conseilours / & moore deliberacion / to
performe youre emprise [2444] ¶ Ye han erred also / for
ye ne han nat examyned youre conseil in the forseyde
manere / ne in due manere / as the cas requyreth [2445] ¶ Ye
han erred also / for ye han maked no diuision bitwixe
youre conseilours / this is to seyn / bytwixe youre trewe
freendes / & youre feyned conseilours / [2446] ne ye ne haue
nat knowe thewyl / of youre trewe freendes / olde / and wise /
[2447] but ye han cast alle hir wordes / in an hochepot^t
& enclyned youre herte / to the moore part^t & to the
gretter nombre / & ther be ye condescended || [2448]
And sith ye woot wel / þat men shal alwey fynde / a
gretter nombre of foolis / than of wise men / [2449] and
therefore / the conseils þat ben at congregacions / and mul-
titudes of folk/ ther as men take moore reward / to the
nombre / than to the sapience of persones / [2450] ye se wel /
þat in swyche conseillynges / foolis han the maistrie [2451]
¶ Melibeus answerde agayn / and seyde / I graunte wel þat
I haue erred / [2452] but ther as thow hast toold me her
biforn / þat he ne is nat to blame / þat chaungeth his con-

seillours / in certeyn cas / & for certeyne Iuste causes /
 [2453] I am al redy / to chaunge my conseilours / right
 as thow wolt deuyse || [2454] The ^{humanum} prouerbe seith / that
 for to do synne / is mannyssh / but certes / for to perseuere
 longe in synne ¹is werk of the deucl

[2455] ¶ To this sentence / answerde anon dame Pru-
 dence / & seyde || [2456] Examyneth quod she youre con-
 seil / & lat vs se / the whiche of hem / han spoken
 moost resonably / & taught yow best conseil / [2457]
 And for as muche / as þat the examinacion is necessarie /
 lat vs bigynne / at the Sirurgiens / and at the Phisiciens /
 þat first speeken in this matere || [2458] I sey yow þat the
 Sirurgiens & Phisiciens / han seyd yow in youre con-
 seil / discretly / as hem oghte / [2459] And in hir speche /
 seyden ful wysly / that to the office of hem / aperteneth / to
 doon to euery wight^t honour & profit^t. and no wight^t
 to anoye / [2460] and after hir craft^t to doon gret diligence
 vn-to the cure of hem / whiche þat they han in hir gouern-
 ance [2461] ¶ And sire / right as they han answered
 wysly & discretly / [2462] right so rede .I. / þat they
 be heighly & souereynly gerdoned / for hir noble
 speche / [2463] and eek for they shullen / do the moore
 ententif bisynesse / in the curacioñ of thy doghter deere ||
 [2464] ffor al be it so / that they ben youre freendes /
 therfore shal ye nat suffren / þat they serue you for
 noght^t. [2465] but ye oghte / the rather gerdone hem / &
 shewen hem youre largesse || [2466] And as touchynge the
 proposicioñ / which þat the Physiciens / encresceden in this
 cas / this is to seyn / [2467] that in maladies / that a
 contrarie / is warissed / by another contrarie [2468] I
 wolde fayn knowe / how ye vnderstande thilke text^t &
 what^t is youre sentence [2469] ¶ Certes quod Melibeus / I
 vnderstonde it in this wise || [2470] that right^t as they han
 doon me a contrarie / right so / sholde I / doon hem another /
 [2471] for right^t as they han venged hem on me / &
 doon me wrong^t right so / shal I venge me vp-on hem /

& doon hem wrong^t [2472] & thanne haue I cured / a contrarie by another

[2473] ¶ Lo / lo / quod dame Prudence / how lightly is every man enclyned / to his owene desir / and to his owene plesance || [2474] Certes quod she / the wordes of the Phisiciens / ne sholde nat han ben vnderstonden / in that wise || [2475] for certes wikkednesse / is nat contrarie to wikkednesse / ne vengeance / to vengeance / ne wrong^t to wrong^t but they ben semblable || [2476] And therefore / .o. vengeance is nat warissshed / by another vengeance / ne .o. wrong^t by another wrong^t [2477] but euerich of hem encreseceh / & aggreggeth oother [2478] ¶ But certes / the wordes of thise Phisiciens / sholde ben vnderstonde / in this wise || [2479] ffor good & wikkednesse / ben two contraries / and pees & werre / vengeance & suffrance / discord & acord / and many othere thynges || [2480] But certes / wikked / shal be warissshed by goodnesse / discord. by acord / weire. by pees / and so forth of othere thynges || [2481] And her to / acordeth Seynt¹ Poul the Apostle / in many places / [2482] he seith / Ne yeldeth noght harm for harm / ne wikked speche / for wikked speche / [2483] but do wel / to hym þat dooth to thee harm / & blesse hym / þat seith to thee harm / [2484] And in manye othere places / he amonesteth pees & acord [2485] ¶ But now wol I speke to yow / of the conseil / which þat was yeuen to yow / by the men of lawe / & the wise folk^t [2486] þat seyden alle by oon acord / as ye han herd bifore || [2487] That ouer alle thynges / ye shal do youre diligence to kepe youre persone / & to warnestore youre hous / [2488] & seyden also / þat in this cas ye oghten for to werke / ful auyself / & with greet^t deliberacioñ [2489] ¶ And sire / as to the firste point^t that toucheth / to the kepyng of youre persone / [2490] ye shul vnderstonde / that he þat hath werre / shal euere moore deuoutly & mekely / preyen / byforn alle thynges / [2491] þat Ihesus crist of his mercy / wol

han hym in his *proteccion* / & ben his *souereyn* helpyng
 at his nede [2492] ¶ for *certes* in this world / ther is no
 wight þat may be conseyllid ne kept suffisantly / with
 oute the keypyng of oure lord Ihesu Crist [2493] ¶ To this
 sentence / acordeth the prophete Daud / that seith / [2494]
 If god ne kepe Citee / in ydel / waketh he þat it kepeth
 [2495] ¶ Now syre / thanne shul ye / committe the keypyng
 of youre persone / to youre trewe freendes / þat been approued
 and yknowe / [2496] & of hem / shul ye axen help / youre
 persone for to kepe || ffor Catoñ seith / If thou hast
 nede of helpe / axe it of thy freendes / [2497] for ther nys
 noon so good a Phisicien / as thy trewe freend [2498]
 ¶ And after this / thanne shul ye kepe yow / fro alle
 straunge folk & fro lyeres / & haue alwey / in suspect
 hir compaignye [2499] ¶ ffor Piers Alfonse seith / Ne
 taak no compaignye / by the wey / of a straunge man / but if
 so be / þat thou haue knowe hym / of a lenger tyme / [2500]
 And if so be / þat he falle in-to thy compaignye / *par-*
auenture / with-outen thyn assent. [2501] enquire thanne /
 as subtilly as thou mayst of his *conuersacion* / & of his lyf
 bifore / And feyne thy wey / Sey þat thou wolt go thider /
 as thou wolt nat go / [2502] And if he bereth a spere /
 hoold thee on the right syde / And if he bere a swerd /
 hoold thee on the left syde [2503] ¶ And after this /
 thanne shal ye kepe yow wysly / from al swich manere
 peple / as I haue seyð bifore / & hem & hir conseil
 eschewe [2504] ¶ And after this / thanne shal ye kepe yow
 in swich manere / [2505] that for any *presumpcion* of youre
 strengthe / þat ye ne despise nat ne attempte nat the
 myght of youre Aduersarie / so lite / þat ye lete / the
 keypyng of youre persone / for youre *presumpcion* / [2506]
 for euery wys man / dredeth his enemy [2507] And
 Salomon seyth ¹ ¶ Weleful is he / þat of alle hath drede ||
 [2508] ffor *certes* he þat thurgh the hardynesse of his
 herte / & thurgh the hardynesse of hym self hath to
 gret *presumpcion* / hym shal yuel bityde [2509] ¶ Thanne

shal ye euere mo countrewayte emboyssementz & al
 espiaille [2510] ¶ ffor Senek seith / þat the wise man
 þat dredeth harmes / escheweth harmes / [2511] ne he ne
 falleth in-to perils / þat perils escheweth / [2512] And al
 be so / þat it seme / þat thow art in siker place: yet
 shaltow alwey do thy diligence / in kepyng^t of thy persone /
 [2513] this is to seyn / ne be nat necligent^t to kepe thy
 persone / nat oonly fro thy grettest enemys / but fro thy
 leeste enemy [2514] ¶ Senek seith || A man þat is
 wel auysed / he dredeth his leste enemy || [2515] Ouyde
 seith || that the litel wesele / wol slee the grete Bole / & the
 wilde hert [2516] ¶ And the book seith / a litel thorn
 may prikke a kyng^t ful soore / And an hound / wol
 holde the wilde boor || [2517] But nathelees / I sey nat/
 thow shalt be so coward / þat thow doute / ther / wher as is
 no drede || [2518] The book^t seith / that som folk haue
 gret lust^t to deceyue / but yet they dreden hem / to be de-
 ceuyed / [2519] yet shaltow drede / to been empoysoned /
 & kepe thee / from the compaignye of scorneres / [2520]
 ¶ ffor the book seith / with Scorneres / make no compaignye /
 but flee hire wordes / as venym

[2521] ¶ Now as to the seconde point^t where as youre
 wise conseilours / conseiled yow / to warnestore youre hous
 with gret diligence: / [2522] I wolde fayn knowe / how þat
 ye vnderstonde thilke wordes / & what is youre sentence

[2523] ¶ Melibeus answerde & seyde || Certes / I vnder-
 stonde it^t in this wise / that I shal warnestore myn hous /
 with toures / swiche as han Castelles / & othere manere
 edifices / & armure / & Artelries / [2524] by whiche
 thynges / I may my persone & myn hous / so kepen &
 defenden / þat myne enemys shul been in drede / myn
 hous for to approche

[2525] ¶ To thys sentence / answerde anon Prudence ||
 Warnestoryng^t quod she of heighe toures / & of grete
 edifices / [*appartiennent aucune foiz a orgueil* [2526] *Après*
len fait les tours et les edifices (MS Reg. 19 C xi, lf 58, col. 2)]

with grete costages / & with gret trauaille / and whan þat they
 been accompliced / yet be they nat worth a stree / but if they
 been defended / by trewe freendes / that been oolde / and wise
 [2527] ¶ And vnderstonde wel / þat the gretteste / and the
 strengeste garnyson / þat ryche man may haue / as wel / to
 kepen his persone / as his goodes: is [2528] þat he be biloued
 with his subgetz and with his neighebores [2529] ¶ ffor
 thus seith Tullius / that ther is a manere garneson / þat
 no man may venquyse ne discomfite / and þat ¹is / [2530]
 a lord / to be biloued / of his Citezeins / and of his peple

[2531] ¶ Now sire / as to the .iiij.^e poynt wher as
 youre olde and wise conseilours / seiden / þat yow ne
 oghte nat sodeynly / ne hastily / proceden in this nede /
 [2532] but þat yow oghte purueien and apparailen yow
 in this cas / with greet diligence and greet deliberacion:
 [2533] trewely / I trowe þat they seyden right wisely /
 and right sooth [2534] ¶ ffor Tullius seith || In euery
 nede / er thow bigynne it apparayle thee / with greet
 diligence || [2535] thanne seye I / þat in vengeance
 takynge / in werre / in bataile / and in warnestorynge /
 [2536] er thow bigynne / I rede þat thow apparaille thee
 ther-to / and do it with greet deliberacion [2537] ¶ ffor
 Tullius seith / that long apparailynge biforn the bataile /
 maketh short victorie || [2538] And Cassidorus seith / the
 garneson is strenger / whan it is long tyme auysed

[2539] ¶ But now lat vs speke of the conseil þat was
 accorded by youre neighebores swiche as doon yow
 reuerence / with-uten loue / [2540] youre olde enemys recon-
 siled / youre flaterers / [2541] þat conseileden yow cer-
 teyne thynges pryuely / and openly conseileden yow the
 contrarie || [2542] The yonge folk also / þat conseileden
 yow / to venge yow / and make werre anon: [2543] And
 certes sire / as I haue seyde biforn || ye han greetly erred /
 to han clepid swich maner folk / to youre conseil / [2544]
 whiche conseilours been ynow repreued bi the resons
 foreseyd / [2545] but nathelees / lat vs now descende to

the special ¶ Ye shuln first proceden after the doctryne of
 Tullius || [2546] Certes / the trouthe of this matere / or of
 this conseil / nedeth nat/ diligently enquire / [2547] for it
 is wel wist' whiche they been / that han doon to yow / this
 trespas and vileynye / [2548] and how manye trespasours /
 and in what manere / they han to yow doon al this
 wrong' and al this vileynye [2549] ¶ And after this /
 thanne shulle ye examyne the .ij.^e condicioñ / which
 þat the same Tullius addeth in this matere / [2550] for
 Tullius put a thyng/ which þat he clepeth consentynge / this
 is to seyn / [2551] who been they and whiche been they / and
 how manye þat consenten to thy conseil in thy wilfulnesse /
 to do hastif vengeance / [2552] And lat vs considere
 also / who been they and how manye been they / and whiche
 been they / þat consenteden / to youre Aduersaries [2553]
 ¶ And certes / as to the firste poynt' it is wel knowen whiche
 folk' been they / þat consenteden / to youre hastif wilful-
 nesse / [2554] for trewely alle tho / þat conseileden yow
 to maken sodeyn werre / ne been nat youre freendes || [2555]
 Lat vs now considere whiche been they þat ye holde
 so greetly youre freendes / as to youre persone / [2556] for
 al be it so / þat ye be myghty and ryche: certes / ye ne
 been / but ¹ allone / [2557] for certes / ye ne han no child
 but a doghter / [2558] ne ye ne han bretheren / ne cosyns
 germayns / ne noon oother ney kynrede / [2559] wherfore /
 þat youre enemys / for drede sholden stynte / to plede *with*
 yow / or destroye youre persone [2560] ¶ Ye knowe
 also / þat youre riches / moten be despended in
 diuerse parties / [2561] and whan þat euery wight hath
 his part' they ne wollen take but litel reward / to venge
 thy deeth || [2562] but thyne enemys / been .iiij.^e and
 they han manye children / bretheren / cosyns / and oother ney
 kynrede / [2563] and thogh so were / thow haddest
 slayn of hem .ij.^e or .iiij.^e yet dwellen ther ynowe / to wreken
 hir deeth / and to sle thy persone || [2564] and thogh so
 be / þat youre kynrede be moore syker and stedefast' than

the kyn of youre aduersarie / [2565] yet nathelees / youre
 kynrede / nys but a fer kynrede / they been / but litel syb
 to yow / [2566] and the kyn of youre enemys / been ney syb
 to hem / and certes as in that hir condicion / is bet than
 youre [2567] ¶ Thanne / lat vs considere also / if the
 conseilynge / of hem þat conseileden yow to taken sodeyn
 vengeance / wheither it acorde to reson / [2568] And
 certes / ye knowe wel nay / [2569] for as by right and
 reson / ther may no man take vengeance on no wight but
 the Iuge þat hath the Iurisdiccioñ of it / [2570] whan it is
 ygraunted hym to take thilke vengeance hastily / or at-
 temprely / as the lawe requereth [2571] ¶ And yet more
 ouer / of thilke word / that Tullius clepith / consentynge /
 [2572] thow shalt considere / if thy myght and thy power
 may consente and suffise / to thy wilfulnesse and to thy
 conseilours / [2573] And certes / thow mayst wel seyn /
 that nay / [2574] for sikerly as for to speke proprely /
 we may do no thyng but oonly swich thyng as we may
 do rightfully / [2575] and certes / rightfully ne mowe ye
 take no vengeance / as of youre propre auctoritee / [2576]
 thanne mowe ye seen / that youre power ne consenteth
 nat / ne acordeth nat with youre wilfulnesse [2577] ¶ Lat
 vs now examyne the .iiij.^e poynt that Tullius clepith
 Consequent || [2578] Thow shalt vnderstande / that the
 vengeance þat thow purposest for to taken / is the conse-
 quent [2579] and ther-of folweth another vengeance /
 peril / and werre / and othere damages with-oute nombre /
 of whiche / we been nat waar / as at this tyme [2580] ¶ And
 as touchynge the .iiij.^e poynt that Tullius clepith en-
 gendrynge / [2581] thow shalt considere / that this wrong
 which that is doon to thee / is engendred / of the hate of
 thyne enemys / [2582] and of the vengeance takynge vp-on
 that wolde engendre another vengeance / and muchil sorwe /
 and wastynge of riches / ¹ as I seyde

[2583] ¶ Now sire / as touchynge to the poynt that Tul-
 lius clepith causes / which þat is the laste poynt / [2584] thow

shalt vnderstonde / þat the wrong þat thow hast receyued /
 hath certeyne causes / [2585] whiche þat clerkes clepen
 Oriens and Efficiens / and Causa longinqua / and causa
 propinqua / this is to seyn: the fer cause / and the ny
 cause / [2586] the fer cause / is almyghty god that is
 cause of alle thynges || [2587] the neer cause / is thy
 thre enemys / [2588] the cause accidental / was hate /
 [2589] the cause material / been the .v. woundes of
 thy doghter / [2590] the cause formal / is the manere of
 hir werkynge / that broghten laddres and clomben In at
 thy wyndowes / [2591] the cause final / was for to sle thy
 doghter / it lettyd nat / in as muche as was in hem was || [2592]
 but for to speke of the fer cause: as to what ende they
 shul come /: or what shal finally bityde of hem in this
 cas: ne kan I nat deme / but by coniectynge and by
 supposynge / [2593] for we shuln suppose / that they shul
 come to a wikked ende / [2594] by cause / þat the book
 of decrees seith ¶ Selden / or with greet peyne been causes
 ybrought to good ende / whan they been baddely bigonne

[2595] ¶ Now sire / if men wolden axe me / why þat
 god suffrede men to do yow this vileynye: certes I kan
 nat wel answeere / as for no soothfastnesse || [2596] for
 the Apostle seith / that the sciences and the Iugementz of
 oure lord god almyghty / been ful depe / [2597] ther may
 no man comprehende ne serchen hem suffisantly [2598]
 ¶ Natheles / by certeyne presumeiouns and coniectynges /
 I holde & bileue / [2599] that god / which þat is ful of
 Iustice and of rightwisnesse / hath suffred this bityde / by
 Iuste cause resonable

[2600] ¶ Thy name is Melibe / this is to seyn / a man
 that drynketh hony / [2601] thow hast y-dronke so muchil
 hony / of swete temporel riches and delices and hon-
 ours of this world / [2602] that thow art dronken / and
 hast forgeten Ihesu crist thy creatour / [2603] thow ne
 hast nat doon to hym / swich honour and reuerence as thee
 oghte: [2604] ne thow ne hast nat wel taken kepe / to

the wordes of Ouyde || that seith / [2605] vnder the hony
of the goodes of thy body: is hyd the venym / that sleth
the soule [2606] ¶ And Salomon seith || If thou hast
founden hony / ete of it that suffiseth / [2607] for if thou
ete of it out of mesure: thou shalt spewe / and be nedý
and poore / [2608] and peraventure / Crist hath thee in
despit and hath torned away fro thee his face / and his
erys of misericorde / [2609] and also he hath suffred /
þat thou ¹hast been punysshed in the manere þat thou
hast ytrespassed: [2610] ¶ Thou hast doon synne agayn
oure lord Crist || [2611] for certes / the .iiij.^e enemys of man-
kynde / that is to seyn / the flessch / the feend / and the
world / [2612] thou hast suffred hem / entre in to thyn
herte wilfully / by the wyndowes of thy body / [2613] and
hast nat defendid thy self / suffisantly agayns hir assautes
& hir temptacions / so þat they han woundid thy
soule. in .v. places || [2614] this is to seyn / the dedly
synnes / þat been entred in to thyn herte by thy .v.
wittes || [2615] And in the same manere / oure lord Crist
hath wold & suffred / þat thy .iiij.^e enemys been entred
in to thyn hous by the wyndowes / [2616] and han
ywoundid thy doghter in the forseyde manere

[2617] ¶ Certes quod Melibe / I se wel / þat ye en-
force yow muchil by wordes to ouercome me in swich a
manere / þat I shal nat venge me of myne enemys / [2618]
shewynge me the perils & the yueles / þat myghten
falle of this vengeance || [2619] But who so wolde considere
in alle vengeance / the perils and yueles þat myghten sewe
of vengeance takynge: [2620] a man wolde neuere take
vengeance / and that were harm / [2621] for by the venge-
ance takynge / been the wikked men disseuered / fro the
goode men / [2622] and they þat han wil to do wikked-
nesse / restreynen hir wikked purpos / whan they seën the
punysshynge & chastisyng of trespassours ||

[2623] [*A ce respond dame Prudence: certes, dist-elle,
je vous octroie que de vengeance vient moult de biens;*

[2624] *mais faire vengeance n'appartient pas à un chascun, fors seulement aux juges et à ceulx qui ont la jurisdiction sur les malfaiteurs.* (Le Ménagier de Paris, i. 214, ed. 1846.)]

[2625] And yet seye I moore / that right as a singuler persone synneth / in takynge vengeance of another man :

[2626] right so synneth the Iuge / if he do no vengeance of hem that it han disserued || [2627] ffor Senek seith thus ||

That maister he seith is good / þat preueth shrewes ||

[2628] And as Cassidore seith || A man dredeth to do outrages / whan he woot & knoweth / þat it displeseth /

to the Iuges and the souereyns || [2629] And another seith ||

The Iuge þat dredeth to do right maketh men shrewes ||

[2630] And Seint Poul thapostle seith in his epistle whan he writeth vn-to the Romyans / That the Iuges beren nat the spere /

with-uten cause / [2631] but they beren it to punyssh the shrewes & mysdoers /

& for to defende the goode men [2632] ¶ If ye wol thanne take vengeance of youre enemys :

ye shul retourne / or haue youre recours to the Iuge þat hath the Iurisdiccioñ vp-on hem /

[2633] & he shal punyssh hem / as the lawe axeth & requereth

[2634] ¶ A quod Melibe / this vengeance liketh me no thyng :

[2635] I bithenke me now & take hede / how fortune hath norissed me /

fro ¹ my childhode / & hath holpen me / to passe many a strong paas :

[2636] Now wol I assayen hire / trowynge with goddes helpe

þat she shal helpe me / my shame for to venge /

[2637] ¶ Certes quod Prudence / if ye wol werke by my conseil :

ye shul nat assayen fortune / by no wey / [2638] ne ye shul nat lene /

or bowe vn-to hire / after the word of Senek ||

[2639] for thynges þat been folily doon / & þat been in hope of fortune :

shullen neuere / come to good ende / [2640] And as the same Senek seith ||

The moore cleer & the moore shynyng þat fortune is / the moore brotil & the sonner broke she is /

[2641] trusteth nat in hire / for she nys nat stedefast ne stable /

[2642] for whan thou trowest to be moost seur or syker of hir

helpe / she wol faile thee & deceyue thee [2643] ¶ And
 where as ye seyn / that fortune hath norissed yow fro youre
 childhode: [2644] I seye / þat in so muchil / shul ye
 the lasse truste in hire & in hir wit || [2645] ffor Senek
 seith || What man þat is norissed by fortune: she maketh
 hym to greet a fool / [2646] ¶ Now thanne syn ye desire /
 & axe vengeance / & the vengeance / þat is doon after
 the lawe / & bfore the Iuge / ne liketh yow nat/ [2647]
 & the vengeance / þat is doon in hope of fortune / is peril-
 ous & vncerteyn: [2648] thanne haue ye noon oother
 remedie / but for to haue youre recours / vn-to the souereyn
 Iuge / þat vengeth / alle vileynyes & wronges / [2649]
 and he shal venge yow / after that hym self witnesseth /
 where as he seith || [2650] leueth the vengeance to me /
 and I shal do it

[2651] ¶ Melibe answerde || If I ne venge me nat of
 the vileynye / þat men han doon to me: [2652] I. somne /
 or warne hem / þat han doon to me that vileynye / & alle
 othere / to do me another vileynye / [2653] for it is writen /
 If thou take no vengeance of an old vileynye: thou som-
 nest thyne Aduersaries / to do thee a newe vileynye || [2654]
 And also / for my suffrance / men wolden do me so
 muchil vileynye / þat I myghte neither bere it ne sus-
 tene / [2655] and so sholde I been put & holden ouer
 lowe || [2656] ffor men seyn / I muchil suffrynge / shul
 manye thynges falle vn-to thee / whiche yow shalt nat
 mowe suffre

[2657] ¶ Certes quod Prudence / I graunte yow / þat
 ouer muchil suffrance / is nat good / [2658] but yet ne
 folweth it nat ther of / þat euery persone / to whom men
 don vileynye / take of it vengeance / [2659] for that aper-
 teneth & longeth al oonly to the Iuges / for they shul
 venge the vileynyes & iniuries / [2660] and therfore /
 tho two auctoritees / þat ye han seyde aboue / been oonly /
 vnderstonden in the Iuges: [2661] ¹for whan they suffren
 ouer muchil / the wronges & vileynyes to be doon

with-outen punysshynge! [2662] they somne nat a man al
 oonly / for to do newe wronges / but they comanden it
 [2663] ¶ Also / a wys man seith / That the Iuge / þat cor-
 recteth nat the Synnere! comandeth & biddeth hym do
 synne || [2664] And the Iuges & souereyns / myghten in
 hir land so muchil suffre of the shrewes & mysdoerys /
 [2665] þat they sholden by swich sufrance by *proces* of
 tyme / wexen of swich power & myght þat they sholden
 putte out the Iuges & the souereyns / from hir places /
 [2666] & at the laste / maken hem lese hir lordshipes

[2667] ¶ But lat vs now putte / þat ye haue leue to
 venge yow / [2668] I seye / ye be nat of myght &
 power / as now to venge yow / [2669] for if ye wol maken
 comparison / vn-to the myght of youre Aduersaries! ye shul
 fynde in manye thynges þat I haue shewid yow er this!
 þat hir condiciõ / is bettre than youre / [2670] and
 therefore seye I / þat it is good as now / þat ye suffre &
 be pacient!

[2671] ¶ fforther-moore / ye knowen wel / that after the
comune sawe! it is a woodnesse / a man to stryue *with* a
 strengre / or a moore myghty man / than he is hym self /
 [2672] & for to stryue / *with* a man / of euene strengthe /
 that is to seyn / with as strong a man as he is! it is peril /
 [2673] and for to stryue *with* a wayker man / it is folye ||
 [2674] and therfore / sholde a man fle stryuyng / as
 muchil as he myghte || [2675] ffor Salomon seith || It is a
 greet worshipe to a man / to kepen hym fro noyse &
 stryf || [2676] And if it so bifalle / or happe / þat a man
 of gretter myght & strengthe / than thow art do thee
 greuance! [2677] Studie & bisie thee rather / to stille
 the same greuance / than for to venge thee || [2678] ffor
 Senek seith / That he putteth hym in greet peril / þat
 stryueth *with* a gretter man / than he is hym self || [2679]
 And Catoñ seith || If a man / of hyer estaat or degree / or
 moore myghty than thow / do thee any / or greuance!
 suffre hym / [2680] for he þat ones hath greued thee /

may another tyme / releue thee & helpe! [2681] ¶ Yet
 sette I cas / ye haue bothe myght & licence for to
 venge yow! [2682] I seye / þat ther be ful manye
 thynges / þat shul restreyne yow / of vengeance takynge /
 [2683] & make yow / for to enclyne to suffre & for
 to han pacience / in the wronges / þat han been doon to
 yow [2684] ¶ ffirst & foreward / If ye wol considere
 the defautes / þat been in youre owene persone! [2685]
 for whiche defautes / god hath suffred yow haue this
 tribulaciō / as I haue seyð yow / her biforn || [2686] ffor
 the Poete seith / That we oghten patiently taken / the tribu-
 laciōs þat comen to vs / whan þat we thynken & consideren /
 þat we han disserued to haue hem || [2687] And ¹Seint
 Gregorie seith / That whan a man / considereth wel / the
 nombre of his defautes and of his synnes! [2688] the
 peynes & the tribulaciōs þat he suffreth / semen the
 lesse vn-to hym / [2689] And in as muche as hym thynk-
 eth / his synnes / moore heuy & greuous! [2690] in so
 muche / semeth his peyne the lighter and the esier vn! to
 hym [2691] ¶ Also / ye owen / to enclyne & bowe youre
 herte / to take the pacience / of oure lord Ihesu crist! as
 seith Seint Peter / in hise Epistles || [2692] Ihesu crist he
 seith / hath suffred for vs / & yeuen ensample to euery
 man / to folwe & sewe hym / [2693] for he dide neuere
 synne / ne neuere cam ther a vileynous word / out of his
 mouth / [2694] Whan men cursed hym / he cursed hem
 noght! And whan men betten hym / he manaced hem
 noght! [2695] ¶ Also / the grete pacience / which
 Seintes / þat been in Paradys / han had / in tribulaciōs þat
 they han y-suffred / *with-oute* hir desert! or gilt! [2696]
 oghte muchil stire yow to pacience [2697] ¶ fforther
 moore / ye sholde enforce yow to haue pacience / [2698]
 considerynge / þat the tribulaciōs of this world / but
 litel while endure / & soone passed been & goon /
 [2699] And the ioie þat a man seketh to haue by
 pacience in tribulaciōs! is *perdurable* / after that! the

Apostle seith / in his Epistle / [2700] The ioye of god he
 seith / is *perdurable* / that is to seyn / euere lastynge [2701]
 ¶ Also / troweth & bileueth stedefastly / þat he nys nocht
 wel ynorissed ne wel ytaught þat kan nat haue pacience /
 or wol nat receyue pacience || [2702] ffor Salomon seith ||
 That the doctrine & the wit of a man / is knowen by
 pacience || [2703] And in another place he seith / That he
 þat is pacient^t gouerneth hym by greet prudence || [2704]
 And the same Salomon seith || The angry & wrathful
 man / maketh noyses / And the pacient man / attempreth
 hem & stilleth || [2705] he seith also || It is moore
 worth to be pacient^t than for to be right strong^t [2706] And
 he þat may haue the lordshipe of his owene herte: is
 moore to preyse / than he þat by his force / or strengthe /
 taketh grete Citees || [2707] And ther-fore / seith Seint
 Iame in his Epistle / That pacience / is a greet vertu of
perfeccioñ

[2708] ¶ Certes quod Melibe / I graunte yow / Dame
 Prudence / þat Pacience / is a greet vertu of *perfeccioñ* /
 [2709] but euery man / may nat haue the *perfeccioñ* / þat ye
 seken / [2710] ne I nam nat of the *nombre* / of right *par-*
fite men / [2711] for myn herte / may neuere be in
 pees / vn-to the tyme / it be vengid || [2712] And al be it
 so / þat it was greet *peril* to myne enemys / to do me a
 vileynye / in takynge vengeance vp-on me: [2713] ¹yet
 token they noon hede of the *peril* / but fulfilden / hir
 wikked wyl & hir corage || [2714] And therefore me
 thynketh / men oghten nat repreue me / thogh I putte me
 in a litel *peril* / for to venge me / [2715] & thogh I do
 a greet *excesse* / that is to seyn / þat I venge / oon *outrage*
 by another //

[2716] A. quod dame Prudence / ye seyn youre wil
 & as yow liketh || [2717] But in no caas of the world / a
 man sholde nat do *outrage* ne *excesse* / for to vengen
 hym || [2718] ffor Cassidore seith || That as yuele / dooth
 he þat vengeth hym by *outrage* / as he / þat dooth the

outrage || [2719] And ther-fore / ye shul venge yow / after
the ordre of right || that is to seyn / by the lawe / and nat
by excesse / ne by outrage || [2720] And also / if ye wol
venge yow / of the outrage of youre Aduersaries in oother
manere than right^t comandeth: ye synnen || [2721] And
therfore seith Senek|| That a man shal neuere venge /
shrewednesse / by shrewednesse / [2722] And if ye seye /
þat right axeth a man / to defende violence by violence /
and fightyng by fightyng: [2723] Certes / ye seye sooth /
whan the defense / is doon anon / *with-uten* interualle / or
with-uten taryng / or delay / [2724] for to defenden hym /
& nat for to vengen hym || [2725] And it bihoueth /
þat a man putte swich attemperance in his defense /
[2726] þat men / haue no cause / ne matere / to repreuen
hym þat defendeth hym / of excesse & outrage || [*Car
autrement ce seroit contre droit et contre Raison.* (Reg. 19
C 7)] [2727] Pardee ye knowe wel / þat ye maken no
defense as now / for to defende yow / but for to venge
yow / [2728] and so seweth it^t þat ye han no wyl / to
do youre dede attemprely / [2729] and therfore / me
thynketh / that pacience is good || ffor Salomon seith || That
he / þat is nat pacient^t shal haue greet harm: /

[2730] ¶ Certes quod Melibe / .I. graunte yow / þat
whan a man / is impacient^t & wrooth / of that^t þat toucheth
hym nat^t and þat aperteneth nat vn-to hym / thogh it
harme hym / it is no wonder || [2731] ffor the lawe seith /
That he is coupable / þat entremetteth hym / or medleth / *with*
swich thyng^t as aperteneth nat vn-to hym [2732] ¶ And
Salamon seith That he þat entremeteth of the
noyse / or stryf / of another man: is lyk to hym / þat taketh
an hound by the erys / [2733] for right as he / that taketh
a straunge hound by the erys / is outhere while / biten *with*
the hound: [2734] right in the same wise is it reson / þat
he haue harm þat by hys impacience medleth hym / of
the noyse / of another man / where / as it aperteneth nat vn-to
hym || [2735] But ye knowe wel þat this dede / that

is to seyn / my grief and my desese ¹toucheth me right
 ny / [2736] And therefore / thogh I be wrooth / and in-
 pacient^t it is no meruaille / [2737] and sauynge youre
 grace / I kan nat se / þat it myghte greetly harme me /
 thogh I tooke vengeance / [2738] for I am richere &
 moore myghty / than myne enemys been / [2739] and wel
 knowen ye / þat by moneye & by hauynge grete posses-
 sions / been alle the thynges of this world gouerned || [2740]
 And Salomon seith || That alle thynges obeyen to
 moneye

[2741] ¶ Whanne Prudence / hadde herd hir housbonde
 auanten hym / of his richesse & of his moneye: dispreis-
 ynge / the power of his Aduersaries: she spak^t & seyde in
 this wise || [2742] Certes deere sire / I graunte yow / þat
 ye been / riche & myghty / [2743] & þat the richesces
 been goode / to hem / þat han wel ygeten hem / & þat
 wel konne vsen hem || [2744] ffor right as the body of a
 man / may nat lyue with-oute the soule: namoore may it
 lyue / with-oute the temporel goodes / [2745] and by rich-
 esses / may a man gete hym grete [frendes] || [2746] ¶ And
 therefore / seith Pamphilles || If Anetherdes doghter / he
 seith / be riche: she may chese / of a thousand men / which
 she wol take to hir housbonde || [2747] for
 of a thousand men: oon wol nat forsaken hire / ne refusen
 hire || [2748] And this Pamphilles seith also || If thow be
 right happy / that is to seyn / If thow be right riche: thow
 shalt fynde / a greet nombre of felawes & freendes / [2749]
 and if thy fortune chaunge / that thow wexe poore: far-
 wel freendshipe & felaweshipe / [2750] for thow shalt been /
 al allone / with-uten any compaignye / but if it be / the
 compaignye of poore folk^t [2751] ¶ And yet^t seith this
 Pamphilles moore ouer || That they þat been / thralle &
 bonde of lynage / shuln be maad / worthy and noble by
 the richesces / [2752] and right so as by richesces / ther
 comen manye goodes: right so by pouerte / come ther
 manye harmes & yueles || [2753] for greet pouerte / con-

streyneth a man / to do manye yueles || [2754] And therfore clepeth Cassidore / pouerte / the moder of Ruyne / [2755] that is to seyn / the moder of ouerthrowynge / or fallynge down [2756] ¶ And therefore / seiþ Piers Alfonc || Oon of the gretteste Aduersitees of this world / is / [2757] whan a free man by kynde / or of burthe / is constreyned by pouerte / to eten / the almesse of his enemy || [2758] And the same seith Innocent^t in oon of his bookes || he seith / That^t sorweful & myshappy / is the condicioñ of a poore beggere / [2759] for if he axe nat his mete^t he dyeth for hungir / [2760] ¹And if he axe / he dyeth for shame / and algates necessitee constreyneth hym to axe || [2761] And therefore seith Salomon || That bettre is to dye / than for to haue swich pouerte || [2762] And as the same Salomon seith / Bettre it is / to dye of bitter deeth / than for to lyuen in swich wise [2763] ¶ By thise resons / þat I haue seyð vn-to yow / and by manye othere resons / þat I koude seye / [2764] I graunte yow / þat richesces been goode / to hem þat geten hem wel / and to hem / þat wel vsen tho richesces || [2765] And therfore wol I shewe yow / how ye shul haue yow / and how ye shul bere yow in gaderynge of richesces / and in what manere ye shul vsen hem

[2766] ¶ first^t ye shul geten hem / *with-uten* greet desir by good leiser sekyngly and nat ouer hastily^t : [2767] ffor a man þat is to desiryng to geten richesces / abandoneth hym first to thefte / & to alle othere yueles || [2768] And therefore seith Salomon || he þat hasteth hym to bisily to wexe riche / shal be noon Innocent^t || [2769] He seith also / that the richesce / þat hastily cometh to a man^t soone & lightly gooth and passeth from a man || [2770] But that richesce þat cometh litel & litel / wexeth alwey & multiplieth || [2771] And sire / ye shullen gete richesces by youre wit^t & by youre trauaille vn-to youre profit^t / [2772] and that *with-uten* wrong^t or harm doynge / to any oother persone || [2773] ffor the lawe

seith || that ther maketh no man hym self riche: if he do
 harm / to another wight^t || [2774] this is to seyn / that
 nature defendeth & forbedeth by right^t þat no man
 make hym self riche / vn-to the harm of another persone
 [2775] ¶ And Tullius seith / that no sorwe / ne no drede
 of deeth / ne no thyng^t þat may falle vn-to a man / [2776]
 is so muchel ageyns nature / as a man / to encesse his
 owene profit^t to the harm of another man: [2777] And thogh
 the grete men and the myghty men geten riches. moore
 lightly than thow: [2778] yet shaltow nat be ydel ne
 slow / to do thy profit^t for thow shalt in alle wise / fle ydel-
 nesse || [2779] ffor Salomon seith || that ydelnesse techeþ
 a man to do manye yueles || [2780] And the same Salomon
 seith / that he þat trauaileth & bisieþ hym / to tilien
 his lond: shal ete breed / [2781] but [he] þat is ydel and
 casteth hym to no bisynesse ne ocupacioñ / shal falle in-to
 pouerte and dye for hunger / [2782] And he þat is
 ydel & slow: kan neuere fynde couenable tyme / for to
 do his profit || [2783] ffor ther is a *versifour* seith || that
 the ydel man excuseth hym in wynter / by cause of the
 grete coold / and in somer / by encheson of the hete ||
 [2784] ffor thise causes seith Caton || waketh / and enclineth
 yow nat ouer mychel / for to slepe || for ouer mychel¹ reste /
 norissheth and causeth manye vices || [2785] And therfore /
 seith Seint Ierome ¶ Dooth *somme* goode dedes / þat the
 deuyl / which is oure enemy / ne fynde yow nat vnocupied /
 [2786] for the deuyl / ne takeþ nat lightly / vn-to his werk-
 ynge / swiche as he fyndeth ocupied in goode werkes

[2787] ¶ Thanne thus / In getynge riches / ye
 mosten fle ydelnesse / [2788] and afterward ye shul vse
 the riches whiche ye haue geten / by youre wit and by
 youre trauaille / [2789] in swich a manere / þat men
 holde yow nat to scars / ne to sparynge / ne to fool large /
 that is to seyn / ouer large a Spender || [2790] ffor right as
 men blamen an Auarous man / by cause of his scarsitee
 & chyncherie: [2791] in the same wise is he to blame /

þat spendeth ouer largely / [2792] and therfore seith
 Catoun || Vse he seith thy richesses / þat thow hast ygeten /
 [2793] in swich a manere / þat men haue no matere ne
 cause / to calle thee / neither wrecche ne chynche / [2794]
 for it is greet shame to a man / to haue a poore herte
 and a riche purs || [2795] He seith also / the goodes þat
 thow hast ygeten / vse hem by mesure / that is to seyn /
 spende mesurably / [2796] for they / þat folily wasten
 and despenden / the goodes þat they han : [2797] whan
 they han namoore propre of hir owene : they shapen hem /
 to take the goodes of another man || [2798] I seye thanne /
 that ye shal fle Auarice / [2799] vsynge youre richesses
 in swich manere / þat men seye nat / þat youre richesses
 been ybiryed / [2800] but þat ye haue hem in youre
 myght and in youre weldyng || [2801] ffor a wys man /
 repreueth the Auaricious man & seith thus / in two
 vers || [2802] Wher-to and why / biryeth a man his
 goodes by his grete Auarice / and knoweth wel / þat nedes
 moste he dye : [2803] for deeth / is the ende of euery man /
 as in this present lyf / [2804] And for what cause / or
 encheson ioyneth he hym / or knytteth he hym / so faste
 vn-to his goodes / [2805] þat alle hise wittes / mowen nat
 disseueren hym / or departen hym fro hise goodes /
 [2806] and knoweth wel / or oghte knowe / þat whan he
 is deed / he shal no thyng bere with hym out of this
 world || [2807] And therfore / seith Seint Austyn || That
 the Auaricious man / is likned vn-to helle / [2808] þat the
 moore it swolweth / the moore desir it hath to swolve &
 deuoure / [2809] And as wel / as ye wolde eschewe to be
 called an Auaricious man or chynche : [2810] as wel
 sholde ye kepe yow & gouerne yow in swich a wise /
 þat men calle yow nat fool large || [2811] Therfore seith
 Tullius || The goodes he seith of thyn hous / sholde
 nat been hidde ne kept so cloos : but þat they myghte
 been opned by pitee & debonairetee / [2812] that is to
 seyn : ¹to yeue hem part þat han greet nede / [2813]

ne thy goodes sholden nat be so open / to be euery
mannes goodes [2814] ¶ Afterward / in getyng^t of youre
richesses / and in vsynge hem: ye shul alwey / haue thre
thynges in youre herte || [2815] that is to seyn / oure lord
god / Conscience / and good name [2816] ¶ first ye shul
haue god in youre herte / [2817] and for no richesse / ye
shullen do no thyng^t which may in any manere displese
god / that is youre Creatour & makere || [2818] ffor after
the word of Salomon / It is bettre to haue a litel good /
with the loue of god/: [2819] than to haue mychel good
& tresor / and lese the loue of his lord god || [2820]
And the prophete seith: That bettre it is to been a
good man / & haue a litel good / and tresor/: [2821] than to
be holden a shrewe / & haue grete richesces || [2822]
And yet seye I ferther moore / that ye sholden alwey
doon youre bisynesse / to gete yow richesces / [2823] so *þat*
ye gete hem / with good conscience || [2824] And thapostle
seith / that ther nys thyng in this world / of which / we
sholden haue so greet ioye / as whan oure conscience / bereth
vs good witnesse || [2825] And the wise man seith || The
substance of a man / is ful good / whan synne is nat in
mannes conscience [2826] ¶ Afterward / in getyng^e of youre
richesses / & in vsynge of hem: [2827] yow moste haue
greet bisynesse & greet diligence / *þat* youre goode
name / be alwey kept^t & conserued || [2828] ffor Salo-
mon seith || that bettre it is & moore it auaieth a man /
to haue good name / than for to haue grete richesces /
[2829] And therefore / he seith in another place || do greet
diligence seith Salomon in kepyng^e of thy freend / and of
thy goode name / [2830] for it shal lenger abyde with
thee / than any tresor / be it neuer so *precious* || [2831]
And *certes* / he sholde nat^t be called a gentil man / that
after god & good conscience / alle thynges left^t ne dooth
his diligence & bisynesse / to kepen his goode name ||
[2832] And Cassidore seith / that it is signe of a gentil
herte / whan a man / loueth & desireth / to haue a good name ||

[2833] And therfore seith seint Austyn || that ther
 been two thynges / þat arn necessarie & nedefulle /
 [2834] and that is good conscience / & good loos || [2835]
 that is to seyn / good conscience / to thyn owene persone
 inward / and good loos for thy neighebore outward ||
 [2836] And he / þat trusteth hym so muchil in his goode
 conscience / [2837] þat he displeseth / and setteth at
 noght his goode name or loos / and rekketh noght thogh
 he kepe nat hys goode name: nys but a cruwel cherl

[2838] ¶ Sire / now haue I shewed yow / how ye shul
 do / in getyngne riches / & how ¹ye shullen vsen hem /
 [2839] And I se wel / þat for the trust þat ye han in
 youre riches / ye wol moeue werre & bataille / [2840]
 I conseile yow / þat ye bigynne no werre / in trust of
 youre riches for they ne suffisen noght werres to mayn-
 tene / [2841] And therfore seith a Philosophe / That
 man þat desireth / and wole algates han werre: shal
 neuere haue suffisance / [2842] for the richer þat he is:
 the gretter despenses moste he make / if he wol haue wor-
 shipe & victorie || [2843] And Salomon seith / That the
 gretter riches þat a man hath / the mo despendours he
 hath || [2844] And deere sire / al be it so / þat for youre
 riches / ye mowe haue muchel folk: [2845] yet bihoueth
 it nat ne it is nat good / to bigynne werre / where as ye
 mowe / in oother manere haue pees vn-to youre worshipe
 & profit || [2846] for the victorie of batailles þat been
 in this world / lyth nat in greet nombre / or multitude of
 peple / ne in the vertu of man / [2847] but it lyth in
 the wyl / & in the hand / of oure lord god almyghty /
 [2848] and therfore Iudas Machabeus / which was
 goddes knyght [2849] whan he sholde fighte ageyn his
 Aduersarie / þat hadde a gretter nombre & a gretter mul-
 titude of folk / and strenger than was the peple / of this Macha-
 be: [2850] yet he reconforted his litel compaignye / and
 seyde / right in this wise || [2851] Als lightly quod he /
 may oure lord god almyghty / yeue victorie to fewe folk

as to manye folk/ [2852] for the victorie of a bataile cometh
 nat^t by the grete nombre of peple / [2853] but it come /
 fro oure lord god of heuene || [2854] And deere sire / for
 as muchel as ther is no man certeyn / if it be worthy / þat
 god yeue hym victorie / [*ne plus quil scet se il est dines de
 lamour de dieu* (MS Reg. 19 C vii, lf 142, bk)] or naght^t after
 that Salomon seith: [2855] therfore euery man / sholde greetly
 drede / werres to bigynne || [2856] And by cause þat in
 batailles / fallen manye perils / [2857] & happeth outhur
 while / þat as soone is the grete man slayn / as the litel
 man / [2858] And as it is ywriten / in the seconde book of
 kynges || The dedes of batailles / been Auenturouse & no
 thyng certeyne / [2859] for as lightly / is oon hurt with a
 spere / as another [2860] ¶ And for ther is greet peril in
 werre: therfore sholde a man / fle & eschewe werre / in
 as muchel / as a man may goodly || [2861] ffor Salomon
 seith / he þat loueth peril / shal falle in peril

[2862] ¶ After þat dame Prudence / hadde spoken in
 this manere / Melibe answerde & seyde [2863] ¶ I se
 wel dame Prudence that by youre faire wordes & by
 youre resons / þat ye han shewed me: þat the werre / liketh
 yow no ¹thyng^t [2864] but I haue nat yet herd youre con-
 seil / how I shal do in this nede

[2865] ¶ Certes quod she / I conseile yow / þat ye
 acorde with youre Aduersaries / & þat ye / haue pees
 with hem || [2866] ffor Seint^t Iame seith / in hise epistles /
 That by concord & pees / the smale richesses / wexen
 grete / [2867] & by debaat and discord / the grete richesses
 fallen down / [2868] And ye knowen wel / þat oon of the
 gretteste & moost souereyn thyng^t þat is in this world /
 is vnitee & pees / [2869] And therfore seyde oure lord
 Ihesu crist^t to hise Apostles / in this wise || [2870] Wel
 happy & blessed been they / þat louen / & purchacen
 pees / for they been called children of god [2871] ¶ A quod
 Melibe now se I wel / þat ye louen nat myn honour
 ne my worshiþe || [2872] Ye knowen wel / þat myne

Aduersaries han bigonnen this debaat and brige by hire outrage / [2873] & ye se wel / þat they ne requeren ne preyen me nat of pees / ne they asken nat to be reconciled : [2874] wol ye thanne / þat I go meke me & obeye me to hem & crye hem *mercy* : [2875] for sothe / that were nat my worships || [2876] ffor right as men seyn / þat ouer greet homlynnesse / engendreth despisyng : so fareth it by to greet humylitee / or mekenesse /

[2877] ¶ Thanne bigan dame Prudence / to maken semblant of wrathe & seyde || [2878] Certes sire / sauf youre grace / I loue youre honour & youre profit / as I do myn owene / & euere haue doon / [2879] ne ye / ne noon oother / syen neuere the contrarie || [2880] And yet if I hadde seyd / þat ye sholde han purchaced the pees & the reconsiliaciō : I ne hadde nat muchel mystake me / ne seyd amys || [2881] ffor the wise man seith || The dissensiō / bigynneth by another man / & the reconsilyngt bigynneth by thy self || [2882] And the prophete seiþ / flee shrewednesse / & do goodnesse / [2883] seke pees & folwe it as muchel as in thee is || [2884] yet seye I nat þat ye shul rather pursue to youre Aduersaries for pees / than they shuln to yow : / [2885] for .I. knowe wel / þat ye been so hard herted / þat ye wol do / no thyng for me || [2886] And Salomon seith / That he þat hath ouer hard an herte / atte laste / he shal myshappe & mystyde

[2887] ¶ Whanne Melibe hadde herd dame Prudence / make semblant of wrathe / he seyde in this wise || [2888] Dame / I pray yow / þat ye be nat displesed / of thynges þat I seye / [2889] for ye knowe wel / þat I am angry & wrooth / & that is no wonder / [2890] and they þat been wrothe / witen nat wel what they doon / ne what they seyn || [2891] Therefore / the prophete seith / That troubled eyen / han no cleer sighte / [2892] but seieth & conseeleth me / as yow liketh / for I am redy / to do / right as ye wol desire / [2893] & if ye repreue me of my folie : I am the moore holden ¹to loue yow / & to preise

yow || [2894] ffor Salomon seith || That he þat repreueth
hym þat dooth folie: [2895] he shal fynde gretter *grace* /
than he þat deceyueth hym by swete wordes

[2896] ¶ Thanne seyde dame Prudence / I make no
semblant of wrathe ne of angir / but for youre grete profit ||
[2897] ffor Salomon seith || he is moore worth / þat re-
preueth / or chideth a fool / for his folie / shewyng hym
semblant of wrathe: [2898] than he þat supporteth hym
& preiseth hym / in his mysdoynge / & laugheth at his
folie || [2899] And this same Salomon seith afterward ||
That by the sorweful visage of a man / that is to seyn / by
the sory & heuy contenance of a man: [2900] the fool
correcteþ & amendeth hym self

[2901] ¶ Thanne seyde Melibe / I shal nat konne an-
swere / vn-to so manye resons / as ye putten to me &
shewen / [2902] seieth shortly / youre wil & youre con-
seil / & I am al redy / to fulfille & perfourne it

[2903] ¶ Thanne /dame Prudence / discouered al hir wyl
vn-to hym / & seyde || [2904] I conseile yow quod she /
abouen alle thynges / þat ye make pees bitwene god &
yow / [2905] & beth reconsiled vn-to hym & to his
grace / [2906] for as I haue seyd yow heer biforn: god
hath suffred yow / to haue this tribulaciō & disese / for
youre synnes / [2907] and if ye do / as I seye yow / god wol
sende youre Aduersaries vn-to yow / [2908] & maken hem
falle at youre feet redy to do youre wyl & youre com-
andementz || [2909] ffor Salomon seith / whan the con-
dicion of man / is plesant & likyng to god: [2910] he
changeth the hertes of the mannes Aduersaries / & con-
streyneth hem / to biseken hym of pees & of *grace* /
[2911] and I pray yow / lat me speken with youre Aduer-
saries / in pryuee place / [2912] for they shal nat knowe / þat it
be of youre wyl / or youre assent. [2913] and thanne / whan
I knowe hir wyl & hir entente: I may conseile yow /
the moore seurlly

[2914] ¶ Dame quod Melibe / dooth youre wyl / &

youre likynge / [2915] for I putte me hoolly / in youre
disposicion & ordinance

[2916] ¶ Thanne dame Prudence / whan she say the
goode wyl of hir housbonde: she delyueride / & took ays in
hir self / [2917] thynkyng / how she myghte bryng this
nede / vn-to a good conclusiō & to a good ende:
[2918] And whan she saugh hir tyme / she sente for thise
Aduersaries to come vn-to hire / in to a priuee place /
[2919] & shewed wysly vn-to hem / the grete goodes /
þat comen of pees / [2920] & the grete harmes &
perils / þat been in werre / [2921] & seyde to hem / in
a goodly manere: / how þat hem oghten haue greet re-
pentance / [2922] of the Iniurie & wrong: þat they
hadden doon / to Melibe hir lord / & vn-to hire / & to
hir doghter //

[2923] And whan they herden / the goodliche wordes / of
dame Prudence: [2924] they weren so supprised &
rauysshed / & hadden so 'greet ioye of hire / þat wonder
was to telle || [2925] A lady quod they / ye han shewid
vn-to us / the blessinge of swetnesse / after the sawe of
Dauid the prophete || [2926] ffor the reconsilyng / which
we ne been nat worthy to haue in no manere / [2927] but we
oghten requeren it with greet contricioñ & humylitee:
[2928] ye of youre grete goodnesse / haue presented vn-to vs ||
[2929] Now se we wel / þat the science / & the konnyng
of Salomon / is ful trewe / [2930] for he seith / That
swete wordes / multiplen & encressen freendes / &
maken shrewes / to be debonaire & meke

[2931] Certes quod they / we putten oure dede &
al oure matere / & cause / al hoolly / in youre goode wyl /
[2932] & been redy to obeye vn-to the speche & comande-
ment of my lord Melibe || [2933] And therfore deere
& benygne lady / we preyen yow / & biseken yow / as
mekely / as we konne & mowen / [2934] þat it like / vn-to
youre grete goodnesse / to ful-fille in dede / youre good-
liche wordes / [2935] for we consideren & knowelichen /

þat we han offendid & greued / my lord Melibe / out of
 mesure / [2936] so ferforth / þat we been nat of power / to
 maken his amendes || [2937] & therfore / we oblige &
 bynde vs & oure freendes / for to do al his wyl & his
 comandementz || [2938] but perauenture / he hath swich
 heynesse & swich wrathe to vsward / by cause of oure
 offense / [2939] þat he wole enioyne vs / swich peyne /
 as we mowe nat bere / ne sustene || [2940] And therfore
 noble lady / we biseken to youre wommanly pitee / [2941]
 to taken swich auisement in this nede / þat we ne oure
 freendes / be nat desherited & destroyed / thurgh oure
 folie

[2942] ¶ Certes quod Prudence / it is an hard thyng^t &
 right perilous / [2943] þat a man putte hym al outrelly
 in the arbitracioñ & Iuggement/ and in the myght &
 power of hise enemys || [2944] ffor Salomon seith^t leeueth
 me / & yeueth credence / to that^t þat I shal seyn ¶ I seye quod
 he / ye peple / & gouernours / & gouernours of holy chirche /
 [2945] to thy sone / to thy wyf / to thy freend / ne to
 thy brother / [2946] ne yeue thow neuere myght^t ne
 maistrie of thy body / whil yow lyuest^t || [2947] Now /
 sithen he defendeth / þat man sholde nat yeue to his
 brother / ne to his freend / the myght of his body^t;
 [2948] by a strengier reson / he defendeth & forbedeth a
 man / to yeue hym self^t to his enemy / [2949] And nathe-
 lees I conseilte yow / þat ye mystruste nat my lord /
 [2950] for I woot wel & knowe verrailly / þat he is
 debonaire & meke / large / curteys / [2951] & no
 thyng desirous / ne coucitous / of good / ne richesse / [2952]
 for ther nys no thyng in this world þat he desireth /
 saue oonly / worshipe & honour [2953] ¶ fforther moore
 I knowe wel & am right seur / þat he shal no thyng
 do in this nede / with-outen my conseil / [2954] and I
 shal so werken in this¹ cause / þat by the grace of oure lord
 god / ye shul be reconciled vn-to vs

[2955] ¶ Thanne seyden they with o voys || Worshipful

lady / we putten vs & oure goodes al fully / in youre wyl
& disposicioñ / [2956] & been redy to come / what
day þat it like vn-to youre noblesse / to lymyte vs / or assigne
vs / [2957] for to maken / oure obligacion & boond / as strong^t
as it liketh vn-to youre goodnesse / [2958] þat we mowe
fulfille / the wyl of yow / & of my lord Melibe

[2959] ¶ Whanne Dame Prudence / hadde herd the an-
sweres of thise men: she bad hem go agayn priuely /
[2960] & she retourned / to hir lord Melibe / & tolde
hym / how she fand hise Aduersaries ful repentant [2961]
knowelichynge ful lowely / hir synnes & trespas / & how
they weren redy / to suffren al payne / [2962] requerynge &
praynge hym / of mercy & pitee

[2963] ¶ Thanne seyde Melibe || he is wel worthy / to
haue pardoñ & foryifnesse of his synne / þat excuseth nat
his synne / [2964] but knowelicheth & repenteth
hym / axinge Indulgence || [2965] ffor Senek seith || There
is the remissioñ & foryifnesse / where as the confessioñ is /
[2966] for confessioñ / is neighebore to Innocence || [2967]
And he seith / in another place [*a blank in the MS.* . . .]
that hath shame of his synne & knowelicheth it ||
And ther-fore / I assente & conferme me to haue pees:
[2968] but it is good / þat we do it nat *with*-outen thassent^t
& wil of oure freendes

[2969] ¶ Thanne was Prudence / right glad & ioyeful /
& seyde || [2970] Certes sire quod she / ye han wel &
goodly answerd / [2971] for right as by the conseil /
assent / & help / of youre frendes / ye han ben stired /
to venge yow / & make werre: [2972] right so / *with*-
outen hire conseil / shul ye nat acorde yow / ne haue
pees with youre Aduersaries || [2973] ffor the lawe seith ||
Ther nys no thyng so good / by wey of kynde / as a thyng^t
to been vnbounde / by hym þat it was ybounde ||

[2974] And thanne Dame Prudence / *with*-outen delay /
or tarynge / sente anon messages / for hir kyn / & for
hire olde freendes / whiche þat were trewe & wise / [2975]

and tolde hem by ordre / in the *presence* of Melibe / al
 this matere / as it is aboue expressed & declared / [2976]
 & preyde hem / þat they wolde yeuen hire auys & con-
 seil / what best were to do / in this nede || [2977] And
 whan Melibees freendes / hadde taken hire auys & deliber-
 acioñ of the forseide matere / [2978] & hadden examyned
 it by greet bisynesse & greet diligence : [2979] they yaue
 ful conseil / for to haue pees & reste / [2980] & þat
 Melibe / sholde receyue *with* good herte / hise Aduersaries /
 to foryifnesse & mercy ||

[2981] And whanne Dame Prudence / hadde herd the
 assent of hir ¹lord Melibe / & the conseil of his freendes /
 [2982] acorde *with* hire wyl and hire entencioñ : [2983]
 she was wonderly glad in herte / & seyde || [2984]
 Ther is an old *prouerbe* quod she / seith || that the
 goodnesse þat thow maist do this day / do it [2985] &
 abide nat ne delaye it nat til tomorwe / [2986] And
 therefore I consaille / þat ye sende youre messages / swiche
 as been discrete & wise [2987] vn-to youre Aduersaries /
 tellynge hem on youre bihalue / [2988] þat if they wol
 trete of pees & of acord / [2989] þat they shape hem /
with-outen delay or tarynge / to come vn-to vs / [2990]
 which thyng¹ parfourned was in dede / [2991] and
 whanne thise trespassours & repentyng folk of hir
 folies / that is to seyn / the Aduersaries of Melibe / [2992]
 hadden herd / what thise messagers seyden vn-to hem :
 [2993] they weren right glad & ioyeful / & answereden
 ful mekely & benygnely / [2994] yeldyng *graces* &
 thankynges / to hire lord Melibe & to al his compaignye /
 [2995] & shopen hem *with*-oute delay to go *with* the
 messagers / & obeye to the comandement of hire lord
 Melibe /

[2996] And right anon they taken hire wey / to the
 court of Melibe / [2997] & tooke *with* hem somme
 of hir trewe freendes / to make feith for hem / & for to
 been hire borwes || [2998] And whan they were come / to

the presence of Melibe: he seyde hem thise wordes
 [2999] ¶ It standeth thus quod Melibe & sooth it is /
 þat ye [3000] causelees & with-outen skile & resoñ /
 [3001] han doon grete Iniuries & wronges to me / &
 to my wyf Prudence / & to my doghter also / [3002] for
 ye han entred in-to myn hous by violence / [3003] & haue
 doon swich outrage / þat alle men knowen wel / þat ye han
 deserued the deeth || [3004] And therfore wol I knowe
 & wite of yow / [3005] wheither ye wol putte the
 punysshynge & chastisyng / & the vengeance of
 this outrage / in the wil of me / & of my wyf
 or ye wol nat

[3006] ¶ Thanne the wiseste of hem thre / answerde for
 hem alle / & seyde || [3007] Sire quod he / we knowen
 wel / þat we been vnworthy / to comen vn-to the court
 of so greet a lord & so worthy / as ye been / [3008] for
 we han so gretly mystaken vs / & han offendid & gilt
 in swich a wise / ageyn youre hey lordshipe / [3009] þat
 trewely / we han deserued the deeth / [3010] but yet for
 the grete goodnesse & debonairetee / þat al the world /
 witnesseth of youre persone / [3011] we submitten vs / to
 the excellence & benygnytee of youre gracious lordshipe /
 [3012] & ben redy tobeye / to alle youre comandementz /
 [3013] bisekynge yow / þat of youre merciablenesse / ye
 wol considere oure grete repentance & lowe submission /
 [3014] & graunten vs foryeuenesse / of oure outrageous
 trespas & offense / [3015] for wel we knowen / þat youre
 liberal grace & mercy / stretchen ferther / in-to good-
 nesse / than 'doon oure outrageouse gyltes & trespas in-to
 wikkednesse / [3016] al be it þat cursedly & damp-
 nably / we han agilt ageyn youre hey lordshipe

[3017] ¶ Thanne Melibe / took hem vp fro the ground
 ful benygnelly / [3018] & receyued hir obligaciōis & hir
 bondes by hir othes / vp-on hir plegges & borwes / [3019]
 & assigned hem a certeyn day / to retourne vn-to his
 court [3020] for to accepte & receyue / the sentence &

Iugement^t þat Melibe wolde comande / to be doon on hem /
by the causes aforeseyd || [3021] whiche thynges ordeyned :
euery man retourned to his hous ||

[3022] And whanne þat dame Prudence saugh hir
tyme / she f[r]eyned / & axed hir lord Melibe / [3023] what
vengeance he thoghte to taken of hise Aduersaries :

[3024] ¶ To which / Melibe answerde & seyde || Certes
quod he .I. thynke & purpose me fully / [3025] to dis-
herite hem / of al þat euere they han / and for to putte
hem in exil / for euere

[3026] ¶ Certes quod Dame Prudence / this were a cruel
sentence / & muchel ageyn reson / [3027] for ye been riche
ynow & han no nede of oother mennes good / [3028]
& ye myghten lightly in this wise / geten yow a coueitous
name / [3029] which is a vicious thyng^t & oghte been
eschewid of euery man / [3030] for after the sawe of the
word of thapostle || Coueitise / is roote of alle harmes /
[3031] And therfore / it were bettre for yow / to lese so
mychel good of youre owene / than for to take of hire good / in
this manere / [3032] for bettre it is / to lese good with wor-
shipe / than it is / to wynne good with vileynye & shame /
[3033] And euery man / oghte do his diligence & his bisy-
nesse / to geten hym a good name / [3034] and yet shal he nat
oonly bisien hym in kepyng his goode name : [3035] but
he shal also / enforeen hym alwey / to do som thyng^t by
which he may renouelle his goode name || [3036] ffor it is
writen / That the olde goode loos / or good name of a man /
is soone goon & passed / whanne it is nat newed / ne re-
noueled || [3037] & as touchynge þat ye seyn / ye
wol exile youre Aduersaries : [3038] that thynketh me /
muchel agayn reson / & out of mesure / [3039] con-
sidered the power / þat they han yeuen yow vp-on hem self ||
[3040] And it is writen / that he is worthy to lesen his
priuilege / þat mysueth / the mygh[t] & the power þat
is yeuen him / [3041] And I sette eas / ye myghte enioyne
hem that payne / by right & by lawe / [3042] which I

trowe ye mowe nat do / [3043] I seye / ye myghte nat
 putte it to execucion *per aventure* / [3044] & thanne
 were it likly / to retorne to the werre / as it was biforn /
 [3045] And ther-fore / if ye wole / þat men do yow obeis-
 ance: yow ¹moste deme moore curteisly / [3046] this is to ✓
 seyn / ye moste yeue / moore esy sentences & Iugementz ||
 [3047] ffor it is writen / that he / þat moost curteisly
 commandeth / to hym / men moste obeyen / [3048] & ther-
 fore .I. pray yow / þat in this necessitee / & in this nede /
 ye caste yow to ouercome youre herte || [3049] ffor Senek
 seith || that he þat ouercometh his herte: ouercometh
 twies || [3050] And Tullius seith || ther is no thyng so
 commendable in a greet lord / [3051] as whan he is debon-
 aire & meke / & apeiseth hym lightly || [3052] And I pray
 yow / þat ye wol forbere now to do vengeance [3053] in
 swich a manere / þat youre good name / may be kept &
 conserued / [3054] & þat men mowe / haue cause &
 matere / to preise yow / of pitee & of mercy / [3055] &
 þat ye haue no cause / to repente yow of thyng þat ye doon ||
 [3056] ffor Senek seith || He ouercometh / in an yuel
 manere þat repenteth hym / of his victorie || [3057] Where-
 fore / I prey yow / lat mercy be in youre
 herte / [3058] to theffect & entente / þat god
 almyghty haue merci on yow in his laste Iugement || [3059]
 ffor Seint Iame seith / in his epistle || Iugement with-
 oute mercy / shal be doon to hym / þat hath no mercy / of
 another wight

[3060] ¶ Whanne Melibe hadde herd / the grete skiles
 & resons of dame Prudence / & hir wise Informaciõs
 & techynges / [3061] his herte gan encline to the wyl of
 his wyf / considerynge hir trewe entente / [3062] con-
 formed hym anon & assented fully / to werken after hir
 conseil / [3063] & thonked god / of whom procedeth al
 vertu / & al goodnesse / þat hym sente a wyf of so greet
 discrecion || [3064] And whanne the day cam / þat hise Ad-
 uersaries / sholde appieren / in his presence: [3065] he spak

to hem ful goodly / & seyde in this wise || [3066] Al be
 it so / þat of youre pride & by presumeiōn & folie /
 & of youre neeligence & vnkonnyng / [3067] ye haue
 mysborn yow / & trespassed vn-to me: [3068] yet for as
 muchel / as I se & biholde youre grete humylitee /
 [3069] & þat ye been sory & repentant of youre giltes:
 [3070] it constreyneth me / to do yow grace & mercy /
 [3071] Wherefore I receyue yow to my grace / [3072] &
 foryeue yow outrely alle the offenses / Iniuries & wronges /
 þat ye haue doon / ageyns me & myne / [3073] to this
 effect & to this ende / þat god / of his endelees mercy /
 [3074] wole atte tyme of oure dyyng / foryeuen vs oure
 giltes þat we han trespassed to hym / in this wrecched
 world / [3075] for douteles / if we be sory & repentant
 of the synnes & giltes / whiche we han trespassed / in the
 sighte of oure lord god: [3076] he is so free & so merci-
 able [3077] þat he wole foryeuen vs oure giltes / [3078]
 & bryngen vs to the blisse / that neuere hath ende .

¶ Here is endid / Chaucers tale / of Melibe 𐝑

GROUP I. FRAGMENT X.

§ 1. THE BLANK-PARSON LINK.

[This is really a link between some unwritten Tale and the Parson's. It has been made into the Manciple-Parson Link (or Yeoman-Parson by the Christ-Church MS) by Chaucer's copiers, though not meant for it.]

HENGWRT MS.

¶ The Prologe / of the Persons tale / 𐝰 [leaf 235]

BY that the 'Maunciple' hadde his tale al ended ^[1—1 over an erasure]
 The Sonne / fro the South lyne is descended
 So lowe / that he nas nat to my sighte
 Degrees .29. as of highte 4
 Ten of the Clokke / it was / so as I gesse
 ffor .xj. foot and litel moore / or lesse
 My shadwe was / at thilke tyme as there
 Of swich feet / as my lengthe parted weere 8
 In .6. feet equal / of proporcioñ
 Ther with / the Mones exaltacioñ
 I mene Libra / alwey gan ascende
 As we were entryng at a Thropes ende 12
 ffor which oure hoost as he was wont to gye
 As in this cas / oure Ioly compaignye
 Seyde in this wise / lordynges euerichon
 Now lakketh vs / no tales / mo than oon 16
 ffulfild is my Sentence / and my decree
 I trowe / þat we han herd of ech degree
 Almoost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce
 I pray to god / so yeue hym right good chaunce } 20
 That telleth this tale / to vs lustily
 Sire preest quod he / artow a Vicary
 Or arte a person / sey sooth by thy fey
 Be what thow be / ne breke thow nat oure pley 24

ffor euery man saue thow / hath toold his tale	25
Vnbokete / and shewe vs / what is in thy Male	
ffor trewely / me thynketh by thy cheere	
Thow sholdest/ knette vp wel a greet matere	28
Telle vs a fable anon / for Cokkes bones	
¶ This person / answerde al atones	
Thow getest fable noon / ytoold for me	
ffor Poul / that writeth vn to Thymothe	32
Repreueth hem / þat weyuen Soothfastnesse	
And tellen fables / and swich wrecchednesse	
Why sholde I sowen draf/ out of my fest'	
Whan I may sowen whete / if þat me lest'	36
ffor which I seye / þat if yow list to heere	[leaf 235, back]
Moralitee / and vertuous matere	
And thanne / þat ye wol yeue me Audience	
I wole ful fayn / at Cristes reuerence	40
Do yow plesance / leueful / as I kan	
But trusteth wel / I am a Southren man	
I kan nat geste / rom / ram / ruf / by lettre	
Ne god woot/ rym holde I but litel bettere	44
And ther fore if yow lest/ I wol nat glose	
I wol yow telle / a myrie tale in prose	
To knytte vp al this feste / and make an ende	
And Ihesu for his grace / wit me sende	48
To shewe yow the wey / in this viage	
Of thilke parfit' glorious pilgrimage	
That highte Ierusalem celestial	
And if ye vouche sau'f/ anon I shal	52
Bigynne vp on my tale / for which I preye	
Telle youre auys / I kan no bettere seye	
But nathelees / this meditacioñ	
I putte it ay / vnder correccioñ	56
Of clerkes / for I am nat textuel	
I take but the sentence / trusteth wel	
Ther fore / I make protestacioñ	
That I wol stonde / to correccioñ	60

¶ Vp on this word / we han assented soone	61
ffor as it semed / it was for to doone	
To enden / in som <i>vertuous</i> sentence	
And for to yeue hym / space and audience	64
And bede oure hoost ^t he sholde to hym seye	
That alle we / to telle his tale hym preye	
¶ Oure hoost ^t hadde the wordes for vs alle	
Sire preest quod he / now faire yow bifalle	68
Sey what yow list ^t and we wol gladly heere	
And with that word / he seyde in this manere	
Telleth quod he / youre meditaciō	
But hasteth yow / the sonne wole adoun	72
Beth fructuous / and that in litel space	
And to do wel / god sende yow his grace	74

¶ Explicit prohemium 𐀚

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THE PARSON'S TALE.

A TREATISE ON PENITENCE, IN 3 PARTS :

- Part I. On **Penitence**, and its 1st requisite **Contrition (A)** (p. 593—612).
 Part II. On its 2nd requisite, **Confession (B)** (p. 612—679).
 Part III. On its 3rd requisite, **Satisfaction (C)** (p. 679—684), with the Writer's Leave-taking and Retractations (p. 684-85).

PART I. (p. 593—612).

ON **PENITENCE**, AND ITS 1ST REQUISITE, **CONTRITION**.

Proem on Jeremiah vi. 16. The Tale is to be on *Penitence* as a full noble way to lead folk to Christ, and is to treat of

- i. 'what is Penitence' (p. 594).
 - ii. 'whennes it is cleped Penitence'. [*not in the Tale.*]
 - iii. 'in how manye maneres been the acciouns or werkynge of Penitence' (p. 594-5).
 - iv. 'how many speses ther been of Penitence' (p. 595).
 - v. 'whiche thynges apertenen and bihouen to Penitence' (p. 595—682 : nearly all Parts I and III, and all Part II).
 - vi. 'whiche thynges destourben Penitence' (at end of Part III, p. 682) (p. 593).
 - i. **Penitence** defined, by *a.* St Ambrose ; *b.* 'som doctour' ; *c.* the writer. Its requisites : 1. bewailing of sins ; 2. purpose to have shrift, to do satisfaction, never to sin again, to continue in good works (p. 594).
 - [ii. *not given.*]
 - iii. The 3 actions of Penitence : 1. Baptism after sin ; 2. not to do deadly sin after baptism ; 3. not thus to do venial sin (p. 594-95).
 - iv. The 3 speses or kinds of Penitence : 1. Solemn (to be put out of church, or do open penance) ; 2. Common (to go naked on pilgrimage) ; 3. Private (p. 595).
 - v. The 3 necessities or requisites for Penitence (p. 596—682) :
 - A. Contrition of heart** (p. 596—612).
 - B. Confession of mouth** (Part II, p. 612—679).
 - C. Satisfaction** (Part III, p. 679—682).
- Penitence avails against 3 things, by which we wrath Christ (p. 595).
- A. Contrition** is the root of Penitence, whose stem bears branches and leaves of Confession, and fruit of Satisfaction.
- Contrition also bears a seed of grace, whose heat draws men to God. (Simile of the child and his nurse's milk.)
- Penance is the tree of life (p. 596).
- Four Points to be known about Contrition :
1. What it is ; 2. the causes that move a man to it ; 3. how to be contrite ; 4. what it avails the soul (p. 597).
 2. The 6 Causes that should move a man to Contrition :
 - a.* Remembrance of Sins (p. 597-8).
 - b.* Whoso does sin is the Thrall of Sin (p. 598-99).
 - c.* Dread of the Day of Doom and the Pains of Hell (p. 599—604). These described : the Doom (p. 599-600) ; Job's 'lond of mysesse and of derknesse' (p. 600-1) ; the 3 shames in hell against (1) 'Honours, (2) delices, and (3) riches' (p. 611) ; poverty in 4 things : no treasure, food, clothing, or friends (p. 602) ; and no delights of the 5 senses. The pain shall be eternal (p. 603). Hell is orderless (p. 603-4). The 7 causes why the damnd have lost all hope (p. 604).
 - d.* Remembrance of the good works we've left undone, and the loss of the good works done while we were in sin (p. 604-6). Deadly sin wipes out all good works formerly done (p. 605) ; and no good works can be done in deadly sin (p. 605-6). The new French song, *J'ai tout perdu mon temps* (also quoted in Chaucer's late poem of *Fortune*).

- e. Remembrance of Christ's suffering for our sins (p. 606). In man's sin, every ordinance is turnd up-so-down (p. 607). For this disorder Christ sufferd (p. 608).
- f. The hope of 3 things: 1. Forgiveness of Sins, 2. the Gift of Grace to do well, 3. the Glory of Heaven (p. 609).
- 3. How to be contrite. Contrition must be universal and total: for sins of thought, for desires against God's law, for wicked words as well as wicked deeds (p. 610). Contrition must be angwishous and continual (p. 609-11).
- 4. How Contrition helps the soul. It sometimes delivers a man from sin; destroys the prison of hell; cleanses the soul; changes the son of Wrath to the son of Grace (p. 611-12).

PART II (*no. v. continued*).**B. CONFESSION** (THE 2ND REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE)
(p. 612—679).

- B. Confession.** § 1. (l. 317) 'what is confession' (p. 612).
- § 2. 'wheither it oghte nedes be doon or noon' (p. 672-9).
- § 3. 'whiche thynges been couenable to verray Confession' (p. 674-79).

CONFESSION, § 1.

- 1. 'Confession is verray shewyng of synnes to the preest' (l. 318) (p. 612). We must understand too
 - a. (l. 321) 'whennes that synnes spryngen' (p. 612—15).
 - b. 'how they encreessen' (p. 615-16; 672-74).
 - c. 'whiche they been' (p. 616—672).
- 1.a. Sin sprang from the fall of Adam (p. 612). The legend of Adam and Eve told (p. 613). From Adam we took Original Sin, and were born sons of eternal damnation; but Baptism rescues us; though we keep liability to temptation, or Concupiscence (p. 613-14).
- Concupiscence*, or the nourishing and occasion of sin. St Paul and St Jerome's temptations (p. 614-15).
- 1.b. How Sin grows in a man. 1. by Concupiscence; 2. Subjection to the Devil; 3. Hesitation; 4. Doing, the Sin becoming Actual (p. 615-16).
- 1.c. Sin is *a.* venial, *β.* deadly (or mortal).
 - a. 1. Venial Sin defined. It skips into Deadly Sin. (Simile of the drops of water into a vessel's hold drowning the ship;) (p. 616).
 - β. 1. Deadly Sin defined (p. 617).
 - a. 2. Of divers small venial sins, hardly thought sins (p. 617-18); eating, drinking, talking, too much; using your wife too much; not visiting the sick (p. 617); talking vanities at church, &c. (p. 618). Cure of venial sins by love to Christ, prayer, confession, good works, receiving the Sacrament, holy-water, &c. (p. 618).
- 1.c. β. 2. *The Seven Deadly Sins.* The Chieftains, head and spring, of all other Sins (p. 619).
 - i. Pride (p. 619-26), and its Remedy (p. 626-8).
 - ii. Envy (p. 628-30), and its Remedy (p. 630-1).
 - iii. Ire or Anger (p. 631-42), and its Remedy (p. 642-5).
 - iv. Accidie or Sloth (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), and its Remedy (p. 650-1).
 - v. Avarice or Covetousness (p. 651-7), and its Remedy (p. 657-8).
 - vi. Gluttony (p. 658-9), and its Remedy (p. 660).
 - vii. Lechery (p. 660-8), and its Remedy (p. 668-72).
- i. **PRIDE** (p. 619—626). Its 16 (and more) Twigs. 1. Disobedience, 2. Boasting, 3. Hypocrisy, 4. Despite, 5. Arrogance (p. 619), 6. Impudence, 7. Swelling of Heart (rejoicing in harm done), 8. Insolence, 9. Elation, 10. Impatience, 11. Contumacy, 12.

Presumption, 13. Irreverence, 14. Pertinacity, 15. Vain-glory, 16. Jangling (chattering).

A private kind of pride (the Host's Wife's and Wife of Bath's¹), wanting to go to offering first, &c. (p. 620).

Two kinds of Pride, *a*. 'within man's heart', *b*. without; *b*. being the sign of *a*., 'as the gaye leefsel atte Taverne is sign of the wyn that is in the Celer'² (p. 620-21), *b*. outside pride.

a. in dear clothing, 1. superfluity of it: its cost, furring, chisel-holes, dragging in the dung, waste of material (p. 621), unfitness for giving to the poor: 2. scantness of it: showing men's privy members, and buttocks (like a she-ape's rump), and the former as half-flayd, in parti-colourd hose³. The 'outrageous array of Women' (p. 623).

β. in horses (p. 623), and vicious grooms to tend 'em; plate-harness, &c.

γ. in household: keeping too many retainers or servants, who oppress the poor (p. 624).

δ. in table: not asking the poor to feasts; having burning and ornamented dishes⁴; too costly cups, &c., and too choice minstrelsy (p. 624).

What Pride sins are deadly, and what venial (p. 624).

The Sources of Pride (p. 624): goods of Nature, Fortune, Grace (p. 624). The Folly of Pride in any of these goods of Nature:

'we ben alle of o fader and of o mooder, and . . . of o nature'⁵.

The general signs of *Gentleness*. (The flies calld 'bees', and their stingless king) (p. 625); 3 gifts of Grace; 3 of Fortune.

The brittleness of popular praise⁶ (p. 626).

The Remedy against Pride.

Humility or Meekness, and its 3 kinds: in 1. heart, 2. mouth, 3. works. 4 kinds of each of these (p. 626-27).

ii. *ENVY* (p. 627-30): defined by the Philosopher and St Augustine. It springs from Malice (p. 627).

Malice; 2 kinds of: 1. hardness of heart, or recklessness; 2. opposing truth (p. 627).

The 2 kinds of Envy (p. 628): 1. sorrow at other men's prosperity; 2. joy at other men's harm: whence comes

Backbiting; 5 kinds (p. 628): 1. praise with a *but* at the end; 2. turning well-meant things upside down to ill ones; 3. lessening a neighbour's goodness; 4. putting one man above another; 5. glad listening to scandal (p. 628).

Grudging or murmuring (p. 628): 1. against God (p. 629); 2. Murmuring from avarice, 3. from pride, 4. from envy; 5. among Servants, who say 'the Devil's *Paternoster*'; 6. Murmuring from ire or hate: thence, *a*. Bitterness of Heart, *b*. Discord, *c*. Scorning; *d*. Accusing (p. 629); *e*. Malignity (p. 630).

The Remedy against Envy (p. 630-31).

Love of God and one's neighbour. How a man shall love his neighbour. How an enemy is included in the name 'neighbour' (p. 630). 3 Remedies of Love, against 3 deeds of Hate (p. 631). Love is the medicine that casts out the venom of Envy from man's heart (p. 631).

iii. *IRE OR ANGER* (p. 631-42), and its 2 kinds: *a*. good Ire or Wrath (p. 632); *b*. wicked Ire, and its 2 kinds: sudden ire, and ire of malice aforethought (p. 632-33).

Three Shrews that grow in the Devil's furnace: Pride, Envy, and Contumely (p. 633).

¹ Melibe-Monk Link, B. § 11; and General Prologue, A.

² Chaucer's father no doubt had a sign outside his wineshop or tavern in Thames Street, London.

³ The outspoken and somewhat coarse abuse of the new fashions in dress is a great change from Chaucer's admirable Third-Period chaff of the moral short-comings of the monks and friars, &c., in the Prologue and middle Tales. It this is not change of man, it's change of mood.

⁴ Chaucer must have seen plenty of these when he was page, valet, and squire.

⁵ Compare Chaucer's *Gloucester*, &c. ⁶ Compare Clerk's Tale, Part VI, st. 135.

CONTENTS OF PARSON'S TALE. PART II.

Wrath takes away a man's wit and spiritual life (p. 634).

Fruits of Wrath: 1. Hate. 2. War and wrong. 3. Manslaughter, *a.* spiritual; *b.* bodily (p. 634).

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b. bodily Manslaughter: slaying with your tongue, giving orders or counsel to slay a man (p. 634).

Manslaughter in deed: its 4 (that is, 7) kinds (p. 635): 1. by law: a Justice condemning a man to death; 2. justifiable homicide, in defence of one's own life; 3. by misadventure: shooting an arrow, &c.; 4. a woman overlying her child; 5. a man making a woman barren by drinks, &c., killing the fœtus within her, shedding his seed in the wrong place; a woman killing the child in her womb; 6. a woman killing her child (after birth) for shame; 7. a man by lechery or blows killing a fœtus.

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1. blaming or despising God, as hazarders do (*Cp. Pardoner's Tale*) (p. 635); and those who treat of the Sacrament of the altar irreverently (p. 636).

2. Attry anger: making angry false excuses for sin.

3. Swearing, which dismembers Christ (p. 636).

a. Of lawful Swearing, before a Judge: its 3 conditions, and its motives; *b.* God's name and Christ's, not to be taken in vain (p. 637); *c.* swearing for gentility or manliness (p. 638); *d.* swearing suddenly; *e.* of Adjuration and Conjurat[i]on by enchanters and necromancers; *f.* of Divination by Dreams, &c.; *g.* of Charms for Wounds and Maladies (p. 638).

4. Lying (p. 638), and its 6 kinds.

5. Flattering. How Flatterers are the Devil's Nurses, his Enchanters and Chaplains (p. 639).

6. Cursing that comes of irous heart: Malison.

7. Chiding and Reproach (p. 640); (specially a chiding wife¹) (p. 640-41).

8. Scorning (p. 641).

9. Giving wicked Counsel (p. 641).

10. Sowing and making Discord (p. 642).

11. Double tongue (p. 642).

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15. Jangling (chattering) (p. 642).

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iv. ACCIDIE, or SLOTH (Discontent, Ennui) (p. 645-49), is an enemy to the 3 states of man,—1. innocence (p. 645), 2. prayer (p. 646), 3. grace;—and to one's livelihood. Its 12 bad consequences (p. 646): 1. Sloth (and its remedy); 2. Dread to begin good works (p. 646); 3. Wanhope, or Despair (and its Remedy) (p. 647); 4. Somnolence (p. 648), and 5. Negligence, or 6. Recklessness, and the Remedy for each; 7. Idleness; 8. *Tarditas*, or tarrying before turning to God (p. 649); 9. Lachesse, or giving up a good work begun; 10. Coldness; 11. Undevotion; 12. Worldly sorrow (p. 649).

The Remedy against Accidie (p. 650-51): Fortitude or Strength, and its 5 kinds. 1. Magnanimity² or great Courage; 2. Faith or Hope; 3. Assurance; 4. Magnificence; 5. Constancy (p. 651).

¹ Does Chaucer here refer to his former wife?

² Miswritten 'Magnificence' in Ellesmere and Lansdowne MSS.

- v. **AVARICE** (p. 651-57). The difference between Avarice and Covetousness (p. 651); and between an Idolater and an avaricious man (p. 652). Of Covetousness, and lords' extortion from their bondmen: "humble folk been Cristes freendes" (p. 652-53). The Duty of lords to their thralls or churls. Of those that pillage Holy Church (p. 653-54); lords who plunder the poor are like wolves (p. 654). Of Deceit between Merchant and Merchant (p. 654). Of honest bodily Merchandise (the surplus of one country may be sent to help another) (p. 654). Of spiritual Merchandise, or Simony, and its 2 kinds (p. 655),—thieves that steal Christ's souls get livings (p. 655-56);—Hasardry or Games of Chance (p. 656). Other outcomes of Avarice (p. 656): 1. Lying, 2. Theft (bodily and spiritual) (p. 656-57), 3. False Witness, 4. False Oaths (p. 657).

The Remedy against Avarice (p. 657): Mercy and Pity, and reasonable Liberality (p. 658). Of foolish largess (p. 658).

- vi. **GLUTTONY** (p. 658-59), and its 5 kinds (p. 659): 1. Drunkenness, or the burial of man's reason; 2. a troubled spirit; 3. bad way of eating; 4. distemperd bodily humours; 5. forgetfulness. Or, as St Gregory says, 1. eating too soon; 2. eating too delicate food; 3. taking too much; 4. troubling too much about cooking food; 5. eating greedily: these are the 5 fingers of the devil's hand (p. 659).

The Remedy against Gluttony (p. 660): Abstinence, and its fellows. Temperance, Shame, Content with plain food, Moderation, Soberness, Sparring (p. 660).

- vii. **LECHERY** (p. 660). Its punishment in the Old Testament (p. 660). Adultery, and the desire of it (p. 661-62).

The 5 fingers of the Devil's other hand (p. 662); 1. foolish looking; 2. villainous touching; 3. foul words; 4. kissing (old do-tards, and dry dogs at a rose-tree (p. 662); and how a man should love his wife); 5. the stinking deed of lechery (p. 663). Its kinds: 1. Fornication. Taking a maid's maidenhead, or 100th fruit (p. 663). 2. Adultery, defined. 3. Harms following from it: *a.* breaking of faith; *b.* theft (of the wife's body from her husband (Joseph and Potiphar's wife), and of her soul from Christ); *c.* breaking God's commandment, and defouling Christ (p. 664). Of Harlots and Bawds (p. 665). Adultery is set between Theft and Manslaughter. More kinds of Adultery: 1. by Men bound by Religious Vows, &c.; 2. those in Holy Orders (p. 665). Lecherous Priests are like a free Bull in a town, and they eat raw flesh of folk's wives and daughters (p. 666); 3. by man and wife copulating for pleasure only (p. 667); 4. copulation with kinsfolk, spiritual (or godchildren) or fleshly (blood relations). 5. the abominable unmentionable sin; 6. Pollution, of 3 kinds: 1. too rank humours; 2. weakness (p. 667); 3. evil thoughts (p. 668).

The Remedy for Lechery (p. 668): I. Chastity and Continence.

1. in Marriage. (The true effect of Marriage. One husband to have one wife (p. 668). How a man should behave to his wife (p. 669). How the wife should be subject to her husband (p. 669), and be moderate in behaviour, discreet in words, &c. (p. 669-70). The 3 causes for which man and wife may copulate (p. 670): *a.* begetting of children; *b.* to pay the mutual debt of their bodies; *c.* to avoid lechery (p. 670). The 4th cause, pleasure, is deadly sin (p. 670-71).)
2. In Widowhood; 3. Virginity (p. 671).

- II. Special avoidance of causes of lechery: *a.* eating and drinking; long sleeping; *b.* the person who'd tempt you (p. 671-72). (I wish I could tell you the Ten Commandments; but it's too high doctrine (p. 672).) [End of *Confession*, § 1, *c.*]

Sin is in heart, mouth, deed, by the 5 Wits (p. 672).

§ 1. *b.* (see p. 615-16.) The 7 Circumstances that encrease or aggravate sins (p. 672). 1. the person who sins (male or female, &c.); 2. the kind of sin (fornication or homicide); 3. the place it was committed in (as in a church, by a priest) (p. 673); 4. for what motive; 5. the number of times it was committed; 6. by what temptation; 7. how it was committed; and all other circumstances (p. 674).

CONFESSION, § 2, § 3 (p. 674-79).

Profitable Confession, and its 4 (= 3) Conditions (p. 674):

1. sorrowful bitterness of heart (p. 674); its 5 signs: *a.* shamefastness (like the Publican's) (p. 675); *b.* humility; *c.* fulness of tears (p. 675); *d.* no hesitation (like the Magdalen) for shame; *e.* obedience to receive penance laid on you (p. 675).
2. speedy Confession (p. 676); its 4 Conditions: *f.* that it be well thought over; *g.* the greatness and number of sins must be understood; *h.* the sinner must be contrite, and *i.* avoid occasions of sins.
3. Shrift must be made to one man, not more (p. 676).

True Shrift, and its 10 Conditions (p. 677): 1. that it be of free will; 2. that it be lawful (both sinner and priest, Popish); 3. that it be not despairing of Christ's mercy; 4. that a man accuse himself only, and not another; 5. that it be not lying (accusing oneself of sins never committed) (p. 678); that it be by one's own mouth, and not by letter; 7. that the sin be not painted with fair words; 8. that the shrift be to a discreet priest; 9. that the shrift be not made for vain-glory, but for fear of Christ; 10. that the shrift be not made suddenly, for a joke (p. 678). You may be shriven more than once for the same sin; and should be houseld once a year (p. 679).

PART III (*no. v. continued, and no. vi.*).

SATISFACTION (THE 3RD REQUISITE FOR PENITENCE)
(p. 679—684).

In *a.* Alms. *β.* bodily punishment.

a. Alms and its three kinds (p. 679): 1. Contrition of heart. 2. Pity for one's neighbour's faults. 3. Giving good counsel to other's souls and bodies (food, visits in prison, burial). These Alms should be done privily, if possible (p. 680).

β. Bodily Punishment (Penance), of 4 kinds: 1. Prayers (chiefly of the Paternoster, whose expounding I leave to Masters of Theology) (p. 680). 2. Watching, and its 3 kinds: forbearing, *a.* meat and drink, *b.* worldly jollity, and *c.* deadly sin (p. 681). 3. Fasting, and its 4 kinds: Liberality to poor folk; spiritual gladness of heart; not grudging at fasting; reasonable eating. 4. Virtuous teachings, or Discipline: *a.* by word, writing, or example; *b.* by wearing hairshirts, &c., next your skin, scourging yourself, taking evils and injuries patiently (p. 682). [End of no. v. in Part i; p. 593.]

vi. The 4 Things that disturb Penance [no. vi. or last §, of p. 593 at foot] (p. 682). 1. Dread, and its remedy. 2. Shame, and its remedy. 3. Hope: *a.* of long life, and *b.* consequent overconfidence in Christ's mercy (p. 683). 4. Wanhope, or Despair of Mercy; its 3 kinds: *x.* from great and long continued sin; *y.* from falls-back into sin; *z.* from not being able to persevere in goodness (p. 683).

The fruit of Penance (p. 683-4).

EPILOGUE.

The Author's Leave-taking, and Lament over, and Withdrawal of, his Sinful Books, &c. (p. 684-85).

(FOR HENGWRT 559 *b*)

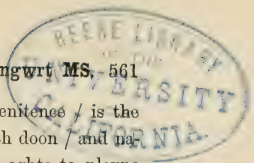
[Hengwrt MS, leaf 236.]

[There are no paragraph-breaks in the MS, but Tyrwhitt's are kept in the print for convenience sake. The sidenotes are all in a later hand.]

¶ Here bigynneth / the Persons tale 𐀚

Ieremie. 6°. || State super vias / & videte & interrogate de semitis antiquis / que sit via bona / & ambulate in ea / & inuenietis refrigerium animabus vestris, &c

[75] O vre swete lord / god of heuene / that no man wole perisse / but wole þat we comen alle to the knoweliche of hym / and to the blisful lyf / þat is perdurable / [76] amonesteth vs / by the prophete Ieromie / that seith in this wise [77] Stondeth vp on the weyes / and seeth / and axeth of olde pathes / that is to seyn / of olde sentences / which is the goode wey / [78] and walketh in that wey / and ye shal fynde refresshyng for youre soules &c [79] ¶ Manye been / the weyes espirituels / that leden folk / to oure lord Ihu crist and to the regne of glorie / [80] of whiche weyes / ther is a ful noble wey and a ful couenable / which may nat faile / to man ne to womman / þat thurgh synne hath mysgoon / fro the righte wey of Ierusalem celestial / [81] and this wey / is clepid Penitence / of which / men sholde gladly herknen and enquere with al his herte / [82] to wite / what is penitence / and whennes / it is clepid penitence / and in how manye maneres / been the accions / or werkynge of penitence / [83] and how manye spices / ther ben of penitences / and whiche thynges / apertenen & bihouen to penitence / whiche thynges / destourben penitence.



[84] ¶ Seint Ambrose seith || that penitence / is the
 pleyninge of man / for the gilt^t þat he hath doon / and na^t
 moore to doon any thyng^t for which hym oghte to pleyne
 [85] ¶ And som doctour seith || Penitence / is þe wayment-
 ynge of man / þat sorweth for his synne / and pyneth
 hym self / for he hath mysdoon || [86] Penitence / *with*
certeyne circumstances / is verray repentance of a man / þat
 halt hym self in sorwe / & oother peyne for hise giltes /
 [87] and for he shal be verray penitent^t he shal first
 biwailen / the synnes / þat he hath doon / and stedefastly
 purposen in his herte / to haue shrift^t of mouthe / and to
 doon satisfaccioñ / [88] and neuere to doon thyng^t for which
 hym oghte moore to biwaile / or to compleyne / and to con-
 tinue in goode werkes / or ellis / his repentance may nat
 auayle [89] ¹ffor as seith Seint Isydre || He is a Iapere / and
 a gabbere / and no verray repentant^t þat eft soone dooth
 thyng^t for which hym oghte repente || [90] Wepynge /
 and nat for to stynte to do synne / may nat auaille || [91] But
 nathelees men shal hope / þat at euery tyme þat man
 falleth / be it neuer so ofte / þat he may arise þurgh peni-
 tence / if he haue grace / but *certeynly* / it is greet dowte /
 [92] for as seith Seint Gregorie || Vnnethe ariseth he out
 of his synne / that is charged / *with* the charge of yuel vsage /
 [93] and ther fore / repentant folk / þat stynte for to
 synne / & forlete synne / er þat synne forlete hem / holy
 chirche / halt hem siker of hire sauacion / [94] and
 he þat synneth / & verrailly repenteth hym in his laste /
 holy chirche / yet hopeth his sauacion by the grete
 mercy of oure lord Ihu crist^t for his repentance / but
 taak the siker wey /

[95] And now / sith þat I haue declared yow / what
 thyng is penitence / now shul ye vnderstonde / þat ther
 been .iiij. acciouns of penitence / [96] ¶ The firste
 is / þat if a man be baptised / after þat he hath
 synned || [97] Seint Augustyn seith / but he be penitent /
 for his olde synful lyf / he may nat bigynne / the newe

[iiij. A]cciouns of
 penitence :

clene lyf / [98] for *certes* / if he be baptised with oute
penitence of his olde gilt / he receyueþ the mark of
baptisme / but nat the *grace* / ne the remission of hise
synnes / til he haue repentance verray [99] ¶ Another
defaute is this / that men doon deedly synne / after þat
they han receyued baptisme / [100] ¶ The thridde defaute
is || that men fallen in venyal Synnes after hire baptisme /
fro day to day || [101] ther of seith seint Augustyn ||
That penitence / of goode and of humble folk. is the
penitence of every day.

[iij. Sp]eces of
penaunce:

[102] ¶ The ^{species} species of penañce / been .iij. || that oon
of hem / is solempne || Another is *commune* || and the
thridde is priuee [103] ¶ Thilke penañce þat is so-
lempne / is in two maneres / as to be put out of holy
chirche in lente / for slaughtre of children / and swich
manere thyng [104] ¶ Another is / whan man
hath synned openly / of which synne / the fame is openly
spoken in the contree / and thanne holy chirche / by Iuge-
ment destreyneth hym / for to doon open penance || [105]
Commune penañce is / that preestes enioynen men *communly* /
in *certeyn* cas / as for to goon *perauenture* naked in
pilgrimage / or barefoot [106] ¶ Pryuee penañce / is
thilke þat men doon al day for priuee synnes / of whiche /
we shryue vs pryuely and receyue pryuee penance

[What] bihoueth
to penitence

[107] ¶ Now shaltow vnderstande / what bihoueth
and is necessarie to verray perfit penitence / and this
stant / on .iij. thynges || [108] Contricion of herte || Con-
fession of Mouth / and Satisfaccioñ || [109] for which /
seith seint Iohn Crisostomus ¹ ¶ Penitence destreyneth man /
to accepte benygneþly euery payne / þat hym is enioyned /
with contricion of herte / & shrift of Mowthe / with satis-
faccioñ / and in wirkyng of alle manere humylitee / [110]
And this is fruytful penitence agayn .iij. thynges / in whiche
we wrathe oure lord Ihu crist || [111] this is to seyn /
by delit in thynkyng / by recchelesnesse in spekyng /
by wikked synful wirkyng / [112] And agayns thise /

wikkede gyltes is penitence / that may be likned vn to a tree /

[113] ¶ The roote of this tree is contricion / þat hideth hym in the herte of hym / þat is verray repentant^t right as the roote of a tree hideth hym in the erthe || [114] Of the roote of Contricion spryngeth a stalke þat bereth branches / and leues of confession / and fruyt of satisfaccioñ || [115] for which / crist seith in his gospel || Dooth digne fruyt of penitence / for by this fruyt^t may men knowe this tree / and nat by the roote / that is hyd / in the herte of man / ne by the branches / ne the leues of Confession || [116] And therfore / oure lord Ihu crist^t seith thus || by the fruyt of hem / shul ye knowe hem || [117] Of this roote eek^t spryngeth a seed of *grace* / the which Seed / is moder of Sikernesse / and this Seed / is egre and hoot^t || [118] the *grace* of thys Seed / spryngeth of god thurgh remembrance on the day of dome / & on the peynes of helle || [119] Of this matere / seith Salomon || that in the drede of god / man forleteth his synne || [120] the hete of thys seed / is the loue of god / & the desiryng of the Ioye perdurable / [121] this hete / draweth the herte of man to god & dooth hym hate his synne / [122] for soothly / ther is no thyng^t þat sauoureth so wel to a child / as the mylk of his norice / ne no thyng is to hym moore abhomynable / than thilke mylk / whan it is medled wth oother mete || [123] right so the synful man / þat loueth his synne / hym semeth / it is to hym moost swete of any thyng || [124] but fro þat tyme / þat he loueth sadly oure lord Ihu crist / & desireth the lyf perdurable / ther nys to hym / no thyng moore abhomynable / [125] for soothly / the lawe of god / is the loue of god || for which / Dauid the prophete seith ¶ I haue loued thy lawe & hated wikkednesse & hate / he þat loueth god / kepeth his lawe & his word : [126] this tree saugh the prophete daniel in spirit vp on the auysion of Nabugodonosor / whanne he con-seiled hym / to do penitence : [127] Penance / is the tree of lyf / to hem þat it receyuen / & he þat holdeth hym

in verray penitence / is blessed / after the sentence of Salomon

[128] ¶ In this penitence or Contricioñ / man shal vnderstonde iiij. thynges / that is to seyn / what is Contricioñ / and whiche ben the causes / þat moeuen a man to Contricioñ / and how he ¹sholde be contrit / and what Contricioñ auailleth to the soule || [129] thanne it is thus / that Contricioñ is the verray sorwe / þat a man receyueth in his herte for hise synnes / with sad purpos to shryue hym & to do penance & neuere moore to do synne / [130] and this sorwe / shal ben in this manere / as seith Seint Bernard || It shal ben heuy and greuouse & ful sharpe & poynañt in herte || [131] first / for man hath agilt his lord & his Creatour / and moore sharp & poynañt for he hath agilt his fader celestial / [132] and yet moore sharpe & poynañt / for he hath wrathed & agilt hym þat boughte hym / þat with his precious blood / hath delyuered vs fro the bondes of synne / & fro the creweltee of the deuel / & fro the peynes of helle

[vj. C]auses to
moue a [ma]n to
contricioñ

.I. ||

[133] ¶ The causes / þat oghten moeuen a man to Contricioñ / been .vj. / first / a man shal remembre hym of hise synnes / [134] but looke þat thilke remembrance ne be to hym no delit by no wey / but gret shame & sorwe for his gilt || for Iob seith / Synful men / doon werkes worthy of Confessioñ / [135] And therfore / seith Ezechie || .I. wol remembre me alle the yeris of my lyf / in bitternesse of myn herte || [136] And god seith in the Apocalipes / Remembre yow / fro whennes þat ye ben falle / for biforn that tyme þat ye synned / ye were the children of god / and lymes of the regne of god / [137] but for youre synne / ye ben woxe / thral & foul and membres of the feend / hate of Aungeles / Schlaundre of holy chirche / & foode of the false serpent perpetual matere / of the fyr of helle / [138] And yet moore foul and abhominable for ye trespasen so ofte tyme / as dooth the hound / þat retorneth to ete his spewyng² [139] & yet

{² Vmte *at*
side: later.}

be ye fouler / for youre longe contynuyng in synne and
 youre synful vsage / for which / ye been roten in youre
 synne as a beest in his donge / [140] Swiche manere of
 thoughtes / maken a man haue shame of his synne
 & no delit^t as god seyth by the prophete Ezechiel /
 [141] ye shal remembre yow of youre weyes / and they
 shullen displese yow soothly / Synnes been the weyes þat
 leden folk to helle

[142] ¶ The seconde cause / þat oghte make a man .2.
 to han desdeyn of synne / is this / that as seith Seint
 Peter || who so þat dooth synne / is thral of synne / &
 synne put a man in greet thraldam / [143] And ther-
 fore / seith the prophete Ezechiel / I wente sorweful / in
 desdayn of my self: ¶ Certes wel oghte a man /
 haue desdayn of synne & with drawe hym fro that
 thraldom & vileynye || [144] And lo / what seith Seneca
 in this matere / he seith thus / though I wiste þat god /
 neither god ne man / ne sholde neuere knowe it/ yet^t
 I wolde I. haue desdayn / for to do synne [145] ¶ And the
 same Seneca also seith || .I. am born to gretter thynges /
 than to be thral to my body / or than for to maken / of my
 body a thral / [146] ne a fouler thral may no man ne
 womman make of his body / than for to yeue his body
 to synne / [147] al were it the fouleste cherl / or the
 fouleste womman þat lyueth and leest of value / yet is he
 thanne moore foul & moore in seruitute / [148] euere
 fro the hyer degree þat man falleth / the moore is he
 thral and moore to god & to the world vil & abhomy-
 nable [149] ¶ O goode god / wel oghte man haue greet des-
 dayn of synne / sith þat thurgh synne / ther he was fre /
 now is he maked bonde / [150] And ther fore / seith Seint
 Augustyn ¶ If thow hast desdayn of thy seruant^t if he
 agilte or synne: haue thow thanne desdayn / þat thow
 thy self sholdest do synne / [151] take reward of thy
 value / þat thow ne be to foul to thy self || [152]
 Allas / wel oghten they thanne haue desdayn / to ben

[[*later*] nota de
puleritudine Mu-
lierum malarum]

seruauntz & thralles to synne / & soore ben ashamed
of hem self/ [153] þat god of his endeles goodnesse /
hath set hem in heigh estat or yeuen hem wit strengthe
of body / heele / beautee / prosperitee / [154] and
boghte hem fro the deeth with his herte blood: þat
they so vnkyndely agayns his gentillesse / quyten hym so
vileynsly to slawghtre of hir owene soules [155] ¶ O
goode god / ye wommen // þat been of so greet beautee /
remembreth yow / of the prouerbe of Salomon || he seith /
[156] likneth a fair womman þat is a fool of hire body /
lyk to a ryng of gold / þat were in the groyn of a Sowe /
[157] for right as a Sowe wroteth in euerich ordure: so
wroteth she hire beaute in styntyngne ordure of synne

- 3. [158] ¶ The thridde cause / þat oughte moeue a man
to Contricion / is drede of the day of dome / and of the
horrible peynes of helle / [159] ffor as Seint Ierome seith /
At every tyme / þat me remembreth of the day of dome / I
quake / [160] for whan I ete and drynke / or what so þat I
do / euere semeth me / þat the trompe sowneth in myn ere /
[161] Riseth ye vp þat ben dede & cometh to the
Iugement [162] ¶ O goode god / muchel oghte a man to
drede swich a Iugement/ ther as we shullen ben alle /
as seith Seint Poul / biforn the Sete / of oure lord Ihu
crist/ [163] where as he shal maken / a general con-
gregaciō / where / as no man may ben absent [164] for
certes / there ne auaieth noon esoyne / ne excusaciō /
[165] and nat oonly / þat oure defautes shullen be
Iuged / but eek þat alle oure werkes / shullen openly
be knowe / [166] And as þat seith Seint¹ Bernard / ther ne
shal no pletynge auaille / ne no sleighte ¶ we shullen yeue
rekenynge of euerich ydel word / [167] there shul we han
a Iuge / þat may nat ben deceyued / ne corrupt. and why:
for certes / alle oure thoghites / ben descouered as to hym /
ne for prayere / ne for mede / he wol nat ben corrupt
[168] and therfore seith Salomon || the wrathe of god
[. no gap in the MS.]

ne wol nat spare no wight/ for prayere / ne for yifte / And
 therfore / at the day of dome / ther nys noon hope to escape ||
 [169] Wherfore / as seith Seint Anselme || fful gret
 anguisse / shullen the synful folk haue / at that tyme /
 [170] ther shal the stierne & wrothe Iuge / sitte aboue /
 and vnder hym / the horrible pit of helle open to de-
 stroye hym þat moot biknowen hise synnes / whiche
 synnes / openly ben shewed biforn god / and biforn
 euery creature / [171] and on the left syde / mo deuyles
 than herte may bithynke / for to harye and drawe
 the synful soules / to the pyne of helle / [172] and with
 Inne the hertes of folk/ shal be the bityng conscience /
 & with oute forth / shal be the world al brennyng /
 [173] Whider shal thanne / the wrechched synful man fle
 to hyde hym / certes / he may nat hyde hym / he moste
 come forth and shewe hym || [174] for certes / as seith
 Seint Ierome / the erthe shal caste hym / out of hym /
 and the See also / & the Eyr also / þat shal ben / ful of
 thonder clappes & lightnynges || [175] Now soothly /
 who so wel remembreth hym of thise thynges / I gesse
 that his synne shal nat torne hym in delit/ but to gret
 sorwe / for drede of the peyne of helle || [176] And ther-
 fore / seith Iob to god || Suffre lord / þat I may awhile
 biwayle / & wepe er I go / with oute returnyng to the
 dirke lond / couered / with the derknesse of deeth / [177]
 to the lond of mysese & of derknesse / where as is the
 shadwe of deeth / where as ther is / noon ordre / or
 ordinañce / but grisly drede þat euere shal laste [178]
 ¶ Lo here may ye seen / þat Iob preyde respit awhile /
 to biwepe and wayle his trespas / for soothly / o day of
 respit/ is bettre than al the tresor of this world / [179] And
 for as muche / as a man may acquyte hym self biforn god
 by penitence in this world / and nat by tresor // therfore
 sholde he preye to god / to yeue hym respit awhile / to
 biwepe & biwaylen his trespas / [180] for certes / al
 the sorwe þat a man myghte make fro the bigynnyng

of the world / nys but a litel thyng^t at regard of the sorwe
of helle [181] ¶ The cause / why þat Iob clepeth helle /
the lond of derknesse^t [182] vnderstondeth ¹that he
clepeth it lond / or erthe / for it is stable & neuere shal
faile / dirkt. for he þat is in helle / hath defaute of
light material / [183] for certes the derke light þat shal
come out of the fyr þat euere shal brenne / shal turne
hym al to peyne / þat is in helle / for it sheweth hym / to the
horrible deueles / þat hym tormenten / [184] couered with
the derknesse of deeth || that is to seyn / þat he þat is in
helle shal haue defaute of the sighte of god / for certes
the sighte of god / is the lyf perdurable || [185] The derk-
nesse of deeth / ben the synnes þat the wrecched man
hath doon / whiche þat destourben hym / to se the face
of god / right as a dirk clowde bitwixe vs and the
sonne [186] ¶ Lond of myseise / by cause þat ther ben
.iiij. manere of defautes agayns .iiij. thynges / þat folk
of this world han in this present lyf || that is to seyn /.
honours /. delices /. and rychesses || [187] Agayns honour /
han they in helle / shame & confusion [188] for wel ye
woot þat men clepen honour / the reuerence / þat man
dooth to man / but in helle / is noon honour ne reuerence /
for certes / namoore reuerence / shal be doon to a
kyng^t than to a knaue || [189] for which / god seith / by
the prophete Ieremye || thilke folk þat me despisen / shulle
ben in despit^t [190] ¶ Honour is eek clepid greet lord-
shipe / ther shal no wight seruen oother / but of harm and
torment^t || Honour is eek clepid / greet dignyte & heigh-
nesse / but in helle shul they ben al fortroden of deueles ||
[191] As god seith || the horrible deueles / shullen goon &
comen vp on the heuedes of dampned folk || And this
is / for as muche as the heyere þat they were in this present
lyf / the moore shulle they ben abated and defouled in
helle [192] ¶ Agayns the richesse of this world / shul
they han myseyse of pouerte / and this pouerte shal be
in .iiij. thynges / [193] In defaute of tresor / of which

þat dauid seith || the riche folk þat embraceden & oneden
 al hir herte to tresor of this world / shulle slepen / in the
 slepyng of deeth / and no thyng ne shal they fynden in
 hire handes / of al hire tresor || [194] And moore ouer / the
 Misayse of helle / shal ben in defaute of mete &
 drynke / [195] for god seith thus by Moyses || they shul
 ben wasted with hunger / and the bryddes of helle / shul
 deuouren hem / *with* bitter deeth / and the galle of the
 dragon / shal ben hire drynke / and the venym of the
 dragon / hire morsels || [196] And forther ouer / hire
 Misyse / shal ben / in defaute of clothyng^t for they shullen
 ben naked in body / as of clothyng^t saue the fyr / in which
 they brenne & othere filthes / [197] and naked shul
 they ben of soule / of alle manere *vertues* / which þat
 is / the clothyng of soule / where ¹ben thanne the gaye
 robes / & the softe shetes / & the smale shertes [198]
 ¶ Lo / what seith god of hem / by the prophete Ysaye ||
 that vnder hem / shul ben strawed Moththes / & hire
 couertures / shullen ben of wormes of helle [199] ¶ And
 forther ouer / hire myseyse / shal ben in defaute of
 frendes / for he is nat pouere / þat hath goode frendes /
 but there is no freend / [200] for neither god / ne no
 creature shal ben freend to hem / and euerich of hem /
 shal haten oother / *with* deedly hate || [201] the sones &
 the doghtren / shullen rebellen agayns fader & moder /
 and kynrede agayns kynrede / and chiden & despisen /
 euerich of hem oother / bothe day & nyght || as god seith /
 by the prophete Michias [202] ¶ And the louynge children
 þat whilom loueden so fleshly euerich oother / wolden
 euerich of hem eten oother / if they myghte || [203] for how
 sholde they louen hem togidre / in the peyne of helle /^t whan
 they hateden euerich of hem oother / in the prosperitee of this
 lyf / [204] for truste wel / hire fleshly loue / was dedly hate /
 as seith the prophete dauid^t / who so þat loueth wikked-
 nesse / he hateth his soule / [205] and who so hateth
 his owene soule / *certes* / he may loue noon oother wight

in no manere / [206] and therfore / in helle is no solas /
 ne no frendshipe / but euere / the moore flessly kynredes
 þat ben in helle / the moore cursynges / the moore chid-
 ynges / and the moore dedly hate / ther is among hem
 [207] ¶ And forther ouer / they shul haue defaute / of alle
 manere delices / for certes / delices ben after the appetites
 of the .v. wittes / as Sichte / Herynge / Smellynge / Sauor-
 ynge / and touchyng / [208] but in helle / hire sighte / shal be
 ful of dirknesse & of smoke : and therfore ful of
 teerys / and hire herynge / ful of waymentyng and of
 gryntyng of teeth / as seith Ihu crist [209] Hire nose-
 thirles / shul ben ful of stynkyng stynk ¶ And as seith
 Ysaye the prophete || hire sauoryng / shal be ful of bitter
 galle / [210] & touchyng of al hir body / ycouered
 with fyr þat neuere shal quenche / & with wormes /
 þat neuere shul dyen / as god seith / by the mowth of
 Ysaye || [211] And for as muche / as they shul nat wene /
 þat they may dyen for peyne / and by hire deeth fle fro
 peyne / that may they vnderstonde in the word of Iob ||
 that seith / there as is the shadwe of deþ / [212] ¶ Certes /
 a shadwe / hath the liknesse of the thyng^r / of which it is
 shadwe / but shadwe / is nat the same thyng^r of which it is
 shadwe || [213] right so / fareth the peyne of helle / it is
 lyk deeth / for the horrible angwissþ / and why / for it
 peyneth hem euere / as thogh men sholde dye anon / but
 certes they shal nat dye / [214] for as seith Seint
 Gregorie / to wrecche kaityues / shal be deeth with oute
 deeth / & ende with outen ende / & defaute with oute
 failyng / [215] for hire deeth / shal alwey lyuen / & hire
 ende shal euere mo bigynne / & hire defaute / shal nat
 faile / [216] And therfore / seith Seint Iohn the
 Euangelist || they shullen folwe deeth / & they shal
 nat fynde hym / & they shul desiren to dye / and deeth
 shal fle fro hem || [217] And eek Iob seith / þat in helle /
 is noon ordre of rewle / [218] and al be it so / þat god hath
 creat alle thynges in right ordre / & no thyng with

outhen ordre / but alle thynges / ben ordeyned & nombred / yet natheles they þat ben dampned / ben no thyng^t in ordre / ne holden noon ordre / [219] for the erthe ne shal bere hem no fruyt || [220] for as the prophete dauid seith / god shal destroye / the fruyt of the erthe / as fro hem / ne water / ne shal yeue hem no moysture / ne the Eyr no refresshyng^t ne fyr no light || [221] for as seith Seint Basile || the brennyng of the fyr of this world / shal god yeuen in helle / to hem þat ben dampned / [222] but the light & the cleernesse / shal he yeuen in heuene to hise children / right as the goode man / yeueth fless^h to hise children / & bones to hise houndes / [223] and for they shullen haue noon hope to escape / seith Seint Iob / atte laste / þat ther shal horroure & grisly drede dwelle with outhen ende // [224] Horroure is alwey drede of harm þat is to come / & this drede shal euere dwelle in the hertes / of hem þat ben dampned / and therefore han they lorn al hire hope / for .viij. causes || [225] ffirst for god þat is hir Iuge / shal be with oute mercy to hem / ne they may nat plesse hym / ne noon of hise halwes / ne they ne may yeue no thyng^t for hire raunsoñ / [226] ne they haue no Voys / to speke to hym / ne they may nat fle fro peyne / ne they haue no goodnesse in hem that they may shewe / to delyuere hem fro peyne / [227] And therefore seith Salomon || the wikked man dieþ & whan he is deed / he shal haue noon hope / to escape fro peyne [228] ¶ Who so thanne wolde wel vnderstonde thise peynes & bithynke hym wel / þat he hath disserued thilke peynes for hise synnes / certes he sholde haue moore talent^t to siken & to wepe / than for to syngen & to pleye || [229] for as þat seith Salomon / who so þat hadde the science to knowe the peynes þat ben establised & ordeyned for synne / he wolde make sorwe / [230] thilke science / as seith Seint Augustyn / maketh a man / to waymente in his herte /

[231] ¶ The .iiij^e. poynt that ¹oghte make a man

The .iiij.^e mevers
to contricioun.

haue contricioñ / is the sorweful remembrance of the
 good / þat he hath left to doon here in erthe / &
 eek / the good þat he hath lorn / [232] Soothly / the goode
 werkes þat he hath left either they ben the goode
 werkes þat he wroghte er he fil in to dedly synne /
 or ellis / the goode werkes þat he wroghte / whil he lay
 in synne / [233] Soothly / the goode werkes þat he dide
 biforn þat he fil in synne / ben al mortefied / & astoned /
 & dilled / by the ofte synnyng / [234] That othere
 goode werkes þat he wroghte / whil he lay in dedly
 synne / they ben outrely dede / as to the lyf / perdurable in
 heuene || [235] thanne thilke goode werkes þat ben
 mortefied by ofte synnyng whiche goode werkes he dide
 while he was in charitee / ne mowe neuere quyken agayn /
 with oute verray penitence / [236] And ther of seith god /
 by the mowth of Ezechiel / that if the rightful man re-
 turne agayn from his rightwisnesse / & werke wikked-
 nesse / shal he lyue / [237] nay / for alle the goode werkes
 þat he hath wrought ne shulle neuere ben in remembrance /
 for he shal dye / in his synne / [238] and vp on thilke
 chapitre / seith Seint Gregorie thus || that we shul vnder-
 stonde this / principally / [239] that whan we doon dedly
 synne / it is for nawght thanne to reherse / or drawn in to
 memorie / the goode werkes þat we han wrought biforn
 [240] ¶ for certes / in the werkynge of the dedly synne /
 ther is no trust to no good werk þat we han doon biforn /
 that is to seyn / as for to haue ther by / the lyf per-
 durable in heuene / [241] but natheles / the goode
 werkes quyken agayn and comen agayn & helpen &
 auaylen / to haue the lyf perdurable in heuene / whan we
 han Contricioñ / [242] but soothly the goode werkes þat
 men doon / whil þat they been in dedly synne / for as muche /
 as they weren doon in dedly synne / they may neuere quyken
 agayn / [243] for certes / thyng þat neuere hadde lyf / may
 neuere quyken / and natheles / al be it þat they ne
 auayle nought to han the lyf perdurable / yet auaylen

they / to abreggen of the peyne of helle / or ellis / to gete
temporal riches / [244] or ellis / þat god wole the
rather enlumpyne & lighte / the herte of the synful
man to han repentance: [245] And eek they auailen /
for to vsen a man to doon goode werkes / þat the feend /
haue the lasse power of his soule / [246] and thus the
curteys lord Ihu crist ne wole þat no good werk
be lost for in som what it shal auayle / [247] but for as
muche as the goode werkes / þat men doon whil they
ben in good lyf / ben al amortised by synne folwyng: /
and eek sith þat alle the ¹goode werkes þat men doon /
whil they ben in dedly synne / ben outrely dede /
as for to han / the lyf *perdurable* / [248] wel may þat man /
þat no good werk ne dooth / synge thilke newe frenshe song:
Iay tout *perdu* / mon temps & mon labour || [249] ffor
certes synne bireueth a man / bothe goodnesse of nature /
& eek the goodnesse of grace / [250] for soothly /
the grace of the holy goost fareth lyk fyr / þat may nat
ben ydel / for fyr faileth / anon / as it forleteth his werk-
ynge / and right so *grace* faileth / anon as it forleteth his
werkynge / [251] thanne leseth the synful man / the goodnesse
of glorie / that oonly / is bihight to goode men þat labouren
and werken / [252] Wel may he be sory thanne þat
oweth al his lyf to god / as longe as he hath lyued / and
eek as longe as he shal lyue / þat no goodnesse ne hath /
to paye with his dette to god / to whom he oweth al his
lyf / [253] for truste wel / he shal yeue accountes as seith
Seint Bernard / of alle the goodes þat han ben yeuen hym
in this present lyf / and how he hath hem despended /
[254] nat so muche / þat ther shal nat *perisse* an heer
of his heed / ne a moment of an houre ne shal nat *perisse*
of his tyme / þat he ne shal yeue of it a rekenynge

[255] ¶ The .v.th thyng þat oghte moeue a man to The .v.tho
nevere t[^o]
contric[i]o
Contricioñ / is remembrance of the passion þat oure lord
Ihu crist suffred for oure synnes / [256] for as seith
Seint Bernard / Whil þat I lyue I shal haue remem-

brance of the trauailes þat oure lord Ihu crist suffred / in
prechyng / [257] his werynesse in *trauailynge* / hise tempt-
 acions whan he fasted / hise longe wakynges whan he
 preyed / hise teerys whan þat he weep for pitee of
 good peple / [258] the wo / and the shame / & the
 filthe þat men seyden to hym / of the foule spittynge
 þat men spitte on his face / of the buffettes that men
 yaue hym / of the fowle Mowwes & of the re-
 preues þat men to hym seyden / [259] of the nayles /
 with whiche he was nayled to the croys / and of al the
 remenant of his passioñ / þat he suffred for my synnes /
 and no thyng for his gilt || [260] And ye shal vnder-
 stonde / þat in mannes synne / is euery manere ordre
 of ordinance / turned vp so down / [261] for it is soop
 þat god /. and reson /. and sensualitee. & the body of man /
 ben so ordeyned / þat euerich of thise .iiij. thynges /
 sholde haue lordshipe ouer that oother / [262] as thus /.
 god sholde haue lordshipe ouer resoñ / & resoñ ouer
 Sensualitee / & Sensualitee ouer the body of man /
 [263] but soothly / whan man synneth / al this ordre / or
 ordinance / is turned vp so down / [264] and therefore
¹thanne / for as muche as the reson of man / ne wol nat be
 subget ne obeisañt to god / þat is his lord by right / ther-
 fore leseth it the lordshipe / þat it sholde haue in
 Sensualitee / & eek ouer the body of man / [265] and
 why / for Sensualitee rebelleth thanne agayns resoñ / and
 by that wey / leseth resoñ the lordshipe ouer Sensualitee
 & ouer the body / [266] for right as reson is rebel to
 god / right so is bothe sensualitee rebel to reson &
 the body also || [267] and *certes* this desordinañce &
 this rebellioñ / oure lord Ihu crist aboghte / vp on his
precious body ful deere / and herkneth in which wise ||
 [268] for as muche thanne / as reson is rebel to god / ther-
 fore is man worthy to haue sorwe / and to be deed /
 [269] this suffred oure lord Ihu crist for man / after þat
 he hadde be bitraysed of his disciple and destreynd &

bounde so / þat the blood brast out at euery nayl of hise
 handes / as seith Seint Augustyn || [270] And forther ouer
 for as muchel as reson of man ne wol nat daunte sensu-
 alitee when it may: / therfore / is man worthy to han shame /
 and this suffrede oure lord Ihu crist for man whan they
 spette in his visage || [271] and forther ouer / for as
 muche thanne / as the kaytif body of man / is rebel /
 bothe to resoñ & to sensualitee / therfore / it is worthy the
 deeth / [272] and this suffred oure lord Ihu crist for man
 vp on the croys / where as ther nas no part of his body
 free with oute gret peyne & bitter passioñ / [273]
 and al this suffred Ihu crist þat neuere forfeled ||
 [.]
no gap in the MS. to muchel am I peyned for the
 thynges þat I neuere deserued and to muche defouled
 for shendshiþe / þat man is worthy to haue || [274] And ther-
 fore / may the synful man wel seye / as seith Seint Bernard /
 Acursed be the bitternesse of my synne / for which / ther
 moste be suffred so muche bitternesse / [275] for certes
 after the diuerse discordañces of oure wikkednesses /
 was the passioñ of Ihu crist ordeyned in diuerse thynges ||
 [276] As thus || Certes synful mannes soule is bitraysed
 of the deuel by coueitise of temporel prosperitee &
 scorned by deceyte / whan he cheseth fleshly delites / and
 yet is it tormented by inpacience of Aduersitee / and byspet
 by seruage & subieccioñ of synne / and atte laste / it is
 slayn fynally || [277] for this desordenañce of synful man /
 was Ihu crist first bitraysed / and after that was he bownde /
 þat cam for to vnbynde vs / of Synne & of peyne || [278]
 thanne was he bicorned / þat oonly sholde ben
 honoured in alle thynges of alle thynges / [279]
 thanne was his visage þat oghte be desired to be seyn
 of alle mankynde in which visage Angels desiren to
 looke / vileynsly bispet / [280] thanne was he skourged /
 þat no thyng hadde agilt and fynally / thanne was he
 crucefied & slayn || [281] thanne was acomplished the

The .vj.^{the}
m[er]e to
con[tricio]n

word of Ysaie || He was wounded for
oure mysdedes / & defouled by oure felonyes [282]
¶ Now sith þat Ihu crist took vp on hym self the
peyne of alle oure wikkednesses / muchel oghte synful
man wepe & biwayle / þat for hise synnes / goddes sone
of heuene / sholde al this payne endure [283] ¶ The .vj.^{the}
thyng^r þat oghte moeue a man to Contricioñ / is the hope
of .iiij. thynges / that is to seyn / foryeuenesse of synne /
and the yifte of grace wel for to do / and the glorie of
heuene / with which god shal gerdone man for hise
goode dedes || [284] And for as muche / as Ihu crist
yeueth vs thise yiftes of his largesse & of his souereyn
bountee / therfore is he clepid Ihus Nazarenus rex
Iudeorum [285] ¶ Ihu is for to seyn / Sauceour / or Sa-
uacioñ / on whom men shal hope / to haue foryifnesse of
synnes / which þat is proprely / Sauacion of synnes /
[286] and therfore / seyde the Aungel to Ioseph || thou shalt
clepe his name Ihus / þat shal saue his peple of hire
synnes / [287] And heerof / seith Seint Peter || ther is
noon oother name vnder heuene þat is yeue to any man /
by which a man may be saued / but oonly Ihus [288]
¶ Nazarenus / is as muche for to seye / as florissynge / In
which a man shal hope / þat he / þat yeueth hym remissioñ
of synnes / shal yeue hym eek^r grace wel to do / for
in the flour / is hope of fruyt^r in tyme comynge / and in
foryifnesse of synnes / hope of grace wel to do [289] ¶ I
was at the dore of thyn herte seith Ihus / & clepede for to
entre / he þat opneth to me / shal haue foryifnesse of
synne / [290] I wol entre in to hym by my grace / and
sowpe with hym / by the goode werkes þat he shal doon /
whiche werkes / ben the foode of god / and he shal sowpe
with me / by the grete ioye þat I shal yeue hym || [291]
thus shal man hope / þat for hise werkes of penance /
god shal yeue hym his regne / as he byheteth hym in the

In what manere
o[ughte] ben thy
contricio[n]

gospel.

[292] ¶ Now shal man vnderstonde / in which

manere shal ben his contricion / I seye / that it shal
 ben vniuersal and total / this is to seyn / a man shal be
 verray repentaunt / for alle hise synnes þat he hath doon / in
 delit of his thoght. for delit is ful perilous / [293] for ther
 ben two manere of consentynges / that oon of hem / is
 clepid / consentynge of affeccion whan a man / is moeued
 to do synne / and thannedeliteth hym longe / for to thynke on
 that synne / [294] and his reson / aperceyueth wel þat
 it is synne / agayns the lawe of god / and yet his resoñ
 refreyneth nat his fool delit / or talent though he seeth wel
 apertly / þat it is agayns the reuerence of god / al though
 his resoñ / ne consente nat / to doon the ¹synne in dede /
 [295] yet seyn somme doctours / þat swich delit þat
 dwelleþ longe / it is ful perilous / al be neuer so lite /
 [296] and also / a man sholde sorwe / namely / for al
 that euere he hath desired agayn the lawe of god / with
 parfit consentynge of his resoñ / for ther of is no doute /
 þat it is dedly synne / in the consentynge / [297] for certes
 ther is no dedly synne / þat it nas first in mannes
 thoght & after that in his delit & so forth / in to
 consentynge & in to dede / [298] Wherfore I seye / þat
 many men ne repenten hem neuere of swyche thoghtes &
 delites / ne neuere shryuen hem of it but oonly / of the
 dede of grete synnes outward [299] ¶ Wher fore I seye /
 þat swiche wikked delites & wikked thoghtes / ben
 subtil bigyleris of hem þat shullen ben dampned [300]
 ¶ Moore ouer / man oghte to sorwen for hise wikked
 wordes / as wel / as hise wikked dedes / for certes /
 the repentance of a singuler synne & nat repente of alle
 hise othere synnes || or ellis repente hym of alle hise
 othere synnes / and nat of a synguler synne / may nat
 auayle / [301] for certes / god almyghty / is al good / and
 therfore / outhere he foryeueth al / or ellis right noght / [302]
 And herof seith Seint Augustyn ¶ I woot certeynly / [303] þat
 god is enemy to euerich synnere / And how thanne / he
 þat obserueth o synne / shal he haue foryeuenesse of the

remanent of hise othere synnes: nay: [304] ¶ And forther
ouer Contricioñ / sholde be wonder sorweful and ang-
uissous / and ther fore / yeueth hym god / pleylnly his
mercy / and therefore / whan my soule was anguissous
with Inne me / I hadde remembrañce of god / þat
my prayere myghte come to hym [305] ¶ fforther ouer
Contricioñ moste be continuel / and þat man haue stede-
fast purpos to shryue hym / & for to amende hym of
his lyf / [306] for soothly / whil Contricion lasteth / man
may euere haue hope of foryeuenesse / And of this / cometh
hate of synne þat destroyeth synne / bothe in hym self
& eek in othere folk at his power / [307] for which
seith Dauid / ye þat louen god / hateth wikkednesse / for
trusteth wel / to loue god / is for to loue that he loueth /
& hate that he hateth

nota

[308] ¶ The laste thyng þat men shal vnderstonde in
Contricioñ / is this / wher of auaieth Contricioñ ¶ I seye /
þat som tyme / Contricioñ delyuereth man fro synne /
[309] of which þat Dauid seith ¶ I seye quod Dauid /
that is to seyn / I. purposed fermely to shryue me / &
thow lord relessedest my synne / [310] and right so
as Contricioñ auaieth nat / with outen sad purpos of
shrifte / if man haue oportuntee: right so / litel worth is
shrifte / or satisfaccioñ / with oute Contricioñ / [311] And
moore / Contricion destroyeth the prisoñ of helle
and maketh wayk & feble / the strengthes of the
deueles / & restoreth the yiftes of the holy goost &
of alle goode vertues / [312] and it clenseth the soule of
synne & delyuereth the soule fro the payne of helle /
& fro the compaignye of the deuel / and fro the seruage
of synne / & restoreth it to alle goodes espirituels &
to the compaignye communoñ of holy chirehe / [313]
and forther ouer / it maketh hym / þat whilom was
sone of Ire / to be sone of grace / and alle thise thynges /
be preued by holy writ / [314] and therefore / he þat
wolde sette his entente / to thise thynges / he were ful

wys / for soothly / he ne sholde nat thanne in al his lyf /
 haue corage to synne / but yeue his body & al his herte /
 to the seruyce of Ihu crist & ther of doon hym
 hommage / [315] for certes / oure swete lord Ihu crist
 hath sparid vs so debonairly in oure folies / þat if he ne
 hadde pitee of mannes soule / a sory song we myghten alle
 syngre

¶ Explicit prima pars penitencie: ¶ Et incipit
secunda pars eiusdem . . .

[316]

THe seconde partie of Penitence / is Confessiō /
 that is signe of Contriciō [317] ¶ Now shul ye
 vnderstonde / what is Confessiō / & wheither
 it oghte nedes be doon / or noon / & whiche
 thynges ben couenable to verray Confessiō

[318] ¶ first shaltow vnderstonde / þat Confession is
 verray shewyng of synnes to the preest [319] this is to
 seyn verray / for he moot confesse hym of alle the
 condiciōs þat bilongen to his synne / as ferforþ as he
 kan / [320] al moot be seyde / & no thyng excused / ne
 hid / ne forwrapped / & nat auañce hym of hise goode
 werkes || [321] And forther ouer / it is necessarie to vnder-
 stonde / whennes þat synnes spryngen / & how they
 encressen / & whiche they ben

[322] ¶ Of the spryngyng of Synnes/as seith Seint Paul
 in this wise || that right as by a man / synne entred first
 in to this world / and thurgh that synne deth / right so
 thilke deth entred in to alle men þat synned / [323]
 and this man was Adam / by whom synne entred in to
 this world / whan he brak the comandementz of god /
 [324] and therefore / he þat first was so myghty / þat he
 sholde nat haue deyed / bicam swich oon / þat he moste
 nedes dye wheither he wolde or noon / & al his progenye
 þat is in this world / þat in thilke man synned [325] ¶ Looke
 þat in thestat of Innocence / whan Adam & Eue /

naked weren in Paradys¹ and no thyng^t ne hadden shame
of hir nakednesse / [326] how þat the serpent þat was
moost wily of alle othere bestes þat god hadde makid /
seyde to the womman || why comanded god to yow /
ye sholde nat eten of euery tree in Paradys? || [327] the
womman answerde / Of the fruyt quod she of the trees
in Paradys / we feden vs / but soothly / of the fruyt of the
tree þat is in the myddel of Paradys / god forbad vs
for to ete / ne nat touche it / list per aventure we sholde
dye || [328] the serpent seyde to the womman / nay /
nay / ye shul nat dye of deth / for sothe god woot þat
what day þat ye eten ther of / youre eyen shulle opne /
& ye shul ben as goddes / konnyng good & harm ||
[329] the womman saugh / þat the tree was good
to fedyng / and fair to the eyen / & delitable to
sight / she took of the fruyt of the tree & eet it &
yaf it to hire housbonde / & he eet & anon the eyen of
hem bothe opned / [330] and whan þat they knewe
þat they were naked / they sowd of flyge leues in manere
of breches / to hiden hire membres || [331] Here may ye
seen / þat dedly synne / hath first suggestion of the
feend / as sheweth heere by the Naddre / and afterward
the delit of the flesh / as sheweth heere by Eua / and
after that the consentyng of reson / as sheweth heere by
Adam / [332] ffor truste wel / thogh so were / þat the
feend tempted oon / that is to seyn the flesh / and the
flesh hadde delit in the beautee of the fruyt deffended /
yet certes til þat reson / that is to seyn Adam / con-
sented to the etyng of the fruyt yet stood he / in the estat
of Innocence [333] ¶ Of thilke Adam / toke we thilke
synne original / for of hym / fleshly descended be we alle
& engendred / of vile & corrupt matere / [334] and
whan the soule / is put in oure body / right anon is con-
tract original synne / and that / þat was erst but oonly
peyne of concupiscence / is afterward / bothe peyne &
synne / [335] And ther fore be we alle yborn sonnes of

wraththe & of dampnacioñ *perdurable* / if it nere baptesme /
 þat we receyuen / which bynymeþ vs the culpe / but for
 sothe / the peyne dwelleth with vs as to temptacioñ / which
 peyne / highte concupiscence / [336] and this concupiscence /
 whan it is wrongfully disposed / or ordeyned in man / it
 maketh hym coueite by couetise of flessch / fleshly synne /
 by sighte of hise eyen / as to erthely thynges / And
 eek¹ coueitise of heynesse by pryde of herte

[337] ¶ Now as to speke of the firste coueitise /
 that is concupiscence / after the lawe of oure membres
 þat weren lawefulliche ymaked & by rightful Iuge-
 ment of god / [338] I seye / for as muche / as man is nat
 obeisañt to god that is his lord / therfore / is the flessch to
 hym desobeisañt¹ thurgh concupiscence / which þat yet is
 clepid norissynne of synne & occasioñ of synne /
 [339] therfore / al the while þat a man hath in hym the
 peyne of concupiscence / it is impossible / but he be
 tempted som tyme & moeued in his flessch to synne /
 [340] and this thyng may nat faile as longe as he lyueth /
 it may wel wexe feble and faile by *vertu* of baptesme
 & by the grace of god / thurgh penitence / [341] but
 fully¹ ne shal it neuere quenche / þat he ne shal som-
 tyme / be moeued in hym self / but if he were al refreided by
 siknesse / or by malefice of sorcerye / or colde drynkes /
 [342] ffor lo / what seith Seint Paul || the flessch coueiteth
 agayn the spirit / & the spirit agayn the flessch / they
 ben so contrarie & so stryuen / þat a man may nat
 alwey do as he wolde [343] ¶ The same Seynt Paul /
 after his grete penañce in water & in londe / in water
 by nyght¹ & by day in gret peril & in gret peyne
 in londe / in famyn & thurst¹ in cold and clothlees
 & ones stooned almoost to the deth / [344] yet seyde he /
 Allas .I. kaytif man / who shal delyuere me fro the prison
 of my kaytif body || [345] And Seint Ierom / whanne he
 longe tyme hadde woned in desert¹ where as he hadde no
 compaignye / but of wilde bestes / where as he hadde

no mete / but herbes / & water to his drynke / ne no bed /
 but the naked erthe / for which his flessȝ was blak as an
 Ethiopen for hete & ney destroyed for cold /. [346]
 yet seyde he / þat the brennyng of lecherye / boylede in al
 his body [347] ¶ Wherefore I woot wel sikerly / þat they
 ben deceyued / þat seyn / they þat ne be nat tempted in
 hire body / [348] Witnesse on Seint Iame the Apostel /
 that seith / that euery wight is tempted in his owene con-
 cupiscence / that is to seyn / that euerich of vs / hath matere
 & occasiō / to be tempted / of the norissynge of synne.
 þat is in his body || [349] And therfore / seith Seint Iohn
 the Euaungelist || If þat we seyn / þat we be *with* oute
 synne / we deceyuen vs selue and trouthe is nat in vs /

[350] ¶ Now shul ye vnderstonde in what manere /
 þat synne wexeth & encresceth in man ¶ the firste
 thyng^t is thilke norissynge of synne / of which I spak
 biforn / thilke fleshly concupiscence / [351] and after
 that comth the subieccioñ of the deuel / this is to seyn
 the deueles bely / *with* which he bloweth in man / the fyr
 of fleshly concupiscence / [352] and after that a man by-
 thyнкeth hym / wheither he wol doon or no / thilke thyng
 to which he is tempted / [353] and thanne / if þat a
 man *with* stonde ¹and wayue the firste entisynges of his
 flessȝ / & of the feend / thanne is it no synne / and if
 so be / þat he do nat so / thanne feeleth he anon a flawmbe
 of delit / [354] and thanne is it good / to be war and kepe
 hym wel / or ellis he wol falle anon in to consentynge of
 synne / & thanne wol he do it / if he may haue tyme
 & place || [355] And of this matere seith Moyses / by
 the deuel / in this manere ¶ The feend seith || I wol
 chace & pursue the man / by wikked suggestiō /
 and I wol hente hym / by moeuyng^t or stiryng of
 synne / & .I. wol departe my prise / or my preye by de-
 liberaciō / & my lust shal ben acomplished in delit ||
 I wol drawe my swerd in consentynge / [356] for certes /
 right as a swerd departeth a thyng in two peeces / right

so consentynge / departeth god fro man / and thanne
wol I sle hym *with* myn hand in dede of synne || thus
seyth the feend / [357] for certes / thanne is a man al
deed in soule / and thus is synne accompliced / by temp-
taciōn / by delit' & by consentynge / & thanne is the
synne clepid actual

[358] ¶ ffor sothe / synne is in two maneres / outhur
it venyal / or dedly synne || Soothly / whan man loueth
any creature / moore than Ihu crist oure creatour / thanne
is it dedly synne / and venial synne is it if man loue
Ihu crist lasse than hym oghte / [359] for sothe / the
dede of this venial synne is ful *perilous* / for it amenuseth
the loue þat men sholde han to god moore & moore /
[360] and therfore / if a man charge hym self *with* manye
swiche venial synnes / certes / but if so be / þat he som
tyme discharge hym of hem by shrifte / they mowe ful
lightly amenuse in hym / al the loue / þat he hath to Ihu
crist' [361] and in this wise skippeth Venial / in to Dedly
synne / for certes / the moore þat a man chargeth his soule /
with venial synnes / the moore is he enclyned to falle in
dedly synne / [362] And therfore / lat vs nat be necligent to
deschargen vs of venial synnes / for the *prouerbe* seith /
that manye smale maketh a greet || [363] And herkne
this ensample || A greet wawe of the See / comth som tyme /
with so greet a violence / that it drencheth the Shipe /
and the same harm / doon som tyme / the smale dropes
of water / þat entreth thurgh a litel creuesse in to the
Thurrok / & in the botme of the shipe / if men be so
necligent' þat men ne discharge hem nat by tyme /
[364] and therfore / al thogh ther be a difference / bitwixe
thise two causes of drenchynge / algates the Shipe is
dreynt [365] ¶ right so fareth it som tyme of dedly
synne / & of anoyouse venials synnes / whan they
multiplie in a man so gretly / þat thilke worldly thynges
þat he loueth / thurgh which he synneth venially / is
as gret in his herte / as the loue of ¹god / or moore / [366]

and therefore / the loue of euery thyng^t þat is nat byset in god /
 ne doon principally for goddes sake / al þat a man
 loue it lasse than god / yet is it venial synne / [367] &
 dedly synne / whan the loue of any thyng^t weyeth
 in the herte of man / as muche / as the loue of god / or
 moore [368] ¶ Dedly synne / as seith Seynt Augustyn
 is / whan man turneth his herte fro god / which that is
 verray souereyn bowntee / þat may nat chaunge / &
 yeueth his herte / to a thyng/ þat may chaunge & flitte /
 [369] and certes / that is euery thyng^t saue god of heuene /
 for sooth is / þat if a man yeue his loue / the which þat
 he oweth al to god with al his herte / vn to a creature /
 certes as muche of his loue as he yeueth to thilke
 creature / so muche he bireueth fro god / [370] and ther-
 fore / dooth he synne / for he þat is dettour to god / ne
 yeldeth nat to god al his dette / that is to seyn / al the
 loue of his herte /

[371] ¶ Now sith man vnderstondeth generally / which
 is venial synne / thanne is it couenable / to tellen specially
 of synnes / whiche þat many a man per auenture ne
 demeth hem nat synnes / & ne shryueth hym nat of the
 same thynges / & yet nathelees they been synnes /
 [372] and soothly / as thise clerkes writen / this is to seyn /
 þat euery tyme þat man eteth or drynketh / moore than
 suffiseth to the sustenaunce of his body / in certeyn he dooth
 synne || [373] and eek / whan he speketh moore than
 it nedeth / it is synne || eek^t whan he herkneth nat be-
 nygnely þe compleynte of the pouere || [374] eek^t whan
 he is in heele of body / and wol nat faste / whan oother folk^t
 fasten / with outhen cause resonable || eek/ whan he slepeth
 moore than nedeth / or whan he comth by thilke encheson /
 to late to chirche / or to othere werkes of charitee || [375]
 eek/ whan he vseth his wyf / with oute souereyn desir
 of engendrure / to honour of god / or for the entente /
 to yelde to his wyf the dette of his body || [376] eek^t
 whan he wol nat visite the syke / & the prisoner / if he may ||

eek / if he loue wyf or child / or oother worldly
 thyng^t moore than reson requereth || eek^t if he flatre / or
 blaūdisē moore than hym oghte / for any necessitee ||
 [377] eek^t if he amenuse / or withdrawe the almesse of
 the pouere || eek^t if he apparileth his mete / moore
 deliciously / than nede is / or ete it to hastily / by likerous-
 nesse || [378] eek/ if he tale vanytes / at chirche / or
 at goddes seruyce / or þat he be a talkere of ydel wordes /
 of folye / or of vileynye / for he shal yelde accounte of
 it^t at the day of dome || [379] eek / whan he biheteth /
 or assureth to do thynges / þat he ne may nat perfourne ||
 eek/ whan þat he / by lightnesse / or folye / mysseyth /
 or scorneth his neigheboore [380] ¹eek^t whan he hath any
 wikked suspēciōn of thyng^t ther he ne woot of it no sooth-
 fastnesse || [381] thise thynges / & mo with oute nombre
 ben synnes / as seith Seint Augustyn /

[382] ¶ Now shalmen vnderstonde / þat al be it so /
 þat noon erthely man may eschewe alle veniale synnes / yet
 may he refreyne hem by the brennyngē loue þat he
 hath to oure lord Ihu crist^t and by preyeres & confession /
 & othere goode werkes / so / þat it shal but litel greue ||
 [383] for as seiþ Seint Augustyn || If a man loue god
 in swich manere / þat al that euere he dooth / is in the
 loue of god / or for the loue of god verraily for he
 brenneth in the loue of god / [384] looke / how mucche þat
 a drope of water þat falleth in a furneys ful of fyr/
 anoyeth / or greueth /^t so mucche / anoyeth a venial
 synne vn to a man / þat is perfit^t in the loue of Ihu
 crist || [385] Men may also / refreyne venial synne /
 by receyuyngē worthily / of the precious body of
 Ihu crist^t [386] by receyuyngē eek/ of holy water /
 by almes dede / by general confession / of Confiteor /
 at masse & at Complyn / & by blessingē of
 Bisshopes / & of preestes / & by othere goode werkes

¶ De Septem peccatis mortalibus ☸

[387]
Now is it bihouely thyng' to telle / whiche ben
 dedly synnes / that is to seyn / chieftaynes
 of synnes / alle they renne in o lees / but in
 dyuerse manere / now ben they clepid chieftaynes /
 for as muche as they ben chief / and sprynge of alle
 othere synnes [388] ¶ Of the roote of thise .vij. synnes /
 thanne is pryde / the general roote of alle harmes / for of
 this roote / spryngen certeyn brañches / as Ire /. Enuye /.
 Accidie / or Sleuthe /. Auarice / or Coueitise /. to commune
 vnderstandynge /. Glotonye /. and lecherye || [389] and
 euerich of thise chief synnes / hath hise brañches and hise
 twiggis / as shal be declared / in hire chapitres folwyng /

[De] Superbia

[from margin :
 no break in MS.]

[390] and though so be / þat no man kan outrely tellen
 [The] braunches [of] Pryde the nombre of twiggis & of the harmes þat comen of
 Pryde / yet wol I shewe a partie of hem / as ye shul
 vnderstande [391] ¶ Ther is / Inobedience / Auantyng /
 Ypocrisye / Despit' Arrogauce / Inpudence / Swellyng of
 herte / Insolence / Elacioñ / Inpacience / Stryf / Contumacie /
 Presumpcioñ / Inreuerence / Pertinacie / Veyne glorie / and
 many another twig' þat I kan nat declare [392] ¶ In-
 [Ino]bedience: obedient is he / þat desobeieth for despit / to the comande-
 mentz of god / & to hise souereins / & to his goostly
 [Auan]tyng. fader [393] ¶ Auantour / is he þat bosteth / of the ¹harm /
 or of the bowntee þat he hath doon [394] ¶ Ypocrite is
 he / that hideth / to shewe hym / swich as he is / and
 [De]spitous sheweth hym / swich as he nawght is / [395] ¶ Despitous
 is he / that hath desdeyn of his neighebores / that is to
 seyn / of his euenechristen / or hath despit / to doon / that
 [Arroga]nt hym oghte to do [396] ¶ Arrogant is he þat thynketh /
 þat he hath thilke bountees in hym / þat he hath nat / or

weneth þat he sholde haue hem / by hise desertes / or
 ellis he demeth / þat he be that he nys nat / [397] ¶ Im-
 pudent is he þat for his pryde / hath no shame of his ^{Impudent}
 synne [398] ¶ Swellynge of herte is / whan man ^{Swelling of}
 reioyseth hym of harm þat he hath doon / [399] ¶ Inso- ^[herte]
 lent^r is he / that despiseth in his Iugement alle oother ^{Insolent.}
 folk / as to regard of his value / & of his konnyng / & of
 his spekyng / & of his beryng [400] ¶ Elacioñ is / whan ^{Elacioun.}
 he ne may neither suffre to haue maister ne felawe [401]
 ¶ Inpacent is he / þat wol nat ben ytaught^r ne vnder- ^{Inpacent.}
 nome of his vice / & by stryf / werreieth trouthe wityngly
 & deffendeth his folye / [402] ¶ Contumax is he / þat ^{Contumax.}
 thurgh his Indignacioñ / is agayns euerich auctoritee / or
 power / of hem þat ben hise souereyns / [403] ¶ Pre-
 sumpecioñ is / whan a man vndertaketh an Emprise / þat ^{Presumpcioun.}
 hym oghte nat do / or ellis þat he may nat do / and that
 is called Surquydie ¶ Inreuerence is / whan men do nat ^{Inreuerence.}
 honour / ther as hem oghte to doon / and waiteth / to be
 reuerenced [404] ¶ Pertinacie / is whan a man deffendeth ^{Pertynacie.}
 his folye / & trusteth to mucche to his owene wit / [405]
 Veyne glorie is / for to haue pompe & delit^r in thise ^{Veyn glorye}
 temporel heynesses & glorifie hem / in worldly
 estat [406] ¶ Ianglyng is / whan a man speketh to ^{Ianglyng}
 mucche biforn folk^r & clappeth as a Melle / & taketh no
 kepe / what he seith

[407] ¶ And yet is ther a pryuee spice of pryde / that ^{Desir of}
 waiteth / first to be salewed / er he wole salewe / al be he ^{worshi[p]}
 lasse worthy / than that oother is *par* auenture / and eek he
 wayteth / or desireth / to sitte / or ellis / to goon aboue hym in
 the weye / or kisse pax / or ben ensensed / or goon to
 offryng biforn his neighebore / [408] and swiche semblable
 thynges / agayns his duetee *per* auenture / but þat he hath /
 his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir / to be
 magnyfyed & honoured / biforn the peple

[409] ¶ Now ben ther / two maneres of pryde / that ^{.ij. maners of}
 oon of hem / is with Inne the herte of man / and that ^{pri[de]}

clothing /

oother is *with* oute / [410] of whiche soothly / thise forseyde thynges / & mo than I haue seyde aperteⁿen to pryde / þat is in the herte of man / And that othere speces of pride ben with oute / [411] but natheles / that oon of thise speces of pride / is signe of that oother / right as the gaye leucsel atte Tauerne / is signe / of the wyn / þat is in the Celer || [412] And this is in manye thynges / as in speche & contenañce / & in outrageous array of clothyng^t [413] for certes / if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothyng^t crist wolde nat so soone haue noted & spoke of the clothyng^t of thilke riche man in the gospel || [414] And as seith Seint Gregorie / that *precious* clothyng^t is cowpable / for the derthe of it & for his softnesse / & for his strañgenesse & degisynesse / and for the superfluitee / or for the inordinat scantnesse of it || [415] Allas / may man nat seen as in oure dayes / the synful costlewe array of clothyng / & namely in to muche superfluitee / or ellis in to desordinat scantnesse

[416] ¶ As to the firste synne / that is in superfluitee of clothyng / which þat maketh it so deere to harm of the peple / [417] nat oonly / the cost of enbrawdyinge / the degyse / endentyng / or barryng / owndyng / palyng / or bendyng / & semblable wast^t of clooth in vanytee || [418] but ther is also the costlewe furringe in hire gownes / so muche pownsonyng of chisel / to maken holes / so muche daggyng of sheris / [419] forth / *with* the superfluitee / in lengthe of the forseyde gownes trailyng in the dong^t & in the Myre on horse / & eek on foote / as wel / of man / as of womman / þat al thilke trailyng / is verrailly as in effect^t wasted / consumed / thredbare / & roten *with* donge rather / than it is yeuen to the pouere / to gret damage / of the forseide pouere folk / [420] and that in sondry wise / this is to seyn / þat the moore þat clooth is wasted / the moore moot it coste to the peple for the scarsnesse / [421] and forther ouer / if so be / þat they wolde yeue swiche pownsonyd &

dagged clothyng^e to the pouere folk/ it is nat conuenient
 to were / for hire estat^e ne suffisant to beete hire necessitee /
 to kepe hem / fro the destemperance of the firmament
 [422] ¶ Vp on that oother syde / to speke of the horrible
 desordynat scantnesse of clothyng^e as ben thise kuttet
 sloppes / or hanselyns / þat thurgh hire shortnesse / ne
 keuere nat^e the shameful membres of man to wikke
 entente / [423] Allas / somme of hem shewen the shape &
 the boce of hire horrible swollen membres / þat semeth
 lik the maladie of hirnⁱa / in the wrappyng^e of hire hoses
 [424] and eek the buttokes of hem / þat faren as it were
 the hyndre part of a she Ape / in the fulle of the Moone ||
 [425] And moore ouer / the wrecched swollen membres /
 þat they shewe thurgh degisyng^e / in departyng^e of
 hire hoses in whit and reed / semeth / þat half hire shame-
 ful pryuee membres weren flayn / [426] ¶ ¹And if so be / þat
 they departen hire hoses in othere colours / as is whit
 & blew / or whit^e & blak / or blak & reed / & so
 forth / [427] thanne semeth it^e as by variañce of colour /
 þat half the partie of hire pryuee membres / ben corrupt^e
 by the fyr of Seint Antony / or by cancre / or othere
 swiche meschañces || Yet [428] of the hyndre part of hire
 buttokes / it is ful horrible for to se / for certes in that
 partie of hire body / ther as they purgen hire stynkyng^e
 ordure / [429] that foule partie / shewe they to the peple
 proudly in despit of honestetee / which honestetee þat
 Ihu crist^e & hise frendes obseruede to shewen in his
 lyue [430] ¶ Now / as of the outrageous array of wommen /
 god woot^e þat thogh the visages of somme of hem / seme
 ful chaste & debonaire / yet notifie they in hire array of
 atyr / likerousnesse & pride [431] ¶ I seye nat^e þat
 honestetee in clothyng^e / of man or womman / is vncouen-
 able / but certes the superfluitee / or the desordinat skantitee
 of clothyng^e is reprouable / [432] ¶ Also / the synne of
 Aornement/ or of apparaille / as in thynges þat apertenen
 to ridyng^e / as in to manye delicat horses þat ben holden

pride in thinges
 what longeth
 to rydyn[ge]

for delit^t þat they ben so faire / fatte / & costlewe / [433]
 and also many a vicious knaue mayntened by
 cause of hem / and in to curious harneys / as in Sadeles / in
 croupers / peytrels / and brydles couered with precious
 clothyng^t & riche barres & plates of gold & of
 siluer / [434] for which / god seith / by Zakarie the
 prophete / ¶ I wol confounde / the ryderes of swiche horses ||
 [435] thise folk^t taken litel reward / of the ridyng^e of
 goddes sone of heuene / & of his harneys / whan he rood
 vp on an Asse / & ne hadde noon oother harneys / but
 the pouere clothes of hise disciples / ne we ne rede nat^t
 þat euere he rood on oother beest^t [436] I speke this
 for the synne of superfluitee / & nat for resonable
 honestete / whan resoñ it requereth [437] ¶ And forther
 ouer / *certes* pride is gretly notified in holdyng^e of gret Meynee /
 whan they ben of litel profit / or of right no profit^t
 [438] and namely / whan that Meynee / is felonous & damage-
 ous to the peple / by hardynesse of hey lordshipe / or by
 wey of offices / [439] for *certes* swiche lordes / sellen
 thanne hir lordship / to the deuel of helle / whan they
 sustenen / the wikkednesse of hire meynce / [440] or ellis /
 whan thise folk^t of lowe degree / as thilke þat holden
 hostelries / sustenen the thefte of hire hostellers /
 & that is / in many manere of deceites /
 [441] thilke manere of folk ben the flyes / þat folwen
 the hony / or ellis the houndes / þat folwen the careyne /
 Swich forseide folk / stranglen spiritually hire lordshipes /
 [442] for which thus ¹seith dauid the prophete ¶ Wikked
 deth / mote come vp on thilke lordshipes / and god yeue / þat
 they mote descende in to helle adown / adown / for in
 hire houses / been Iniquitees & shrewednesses / and nat god
 of heuene / [443] and certes / but if they doon amende-
 ment / right so as god yaf his benysoñ to Pharao by the
 seruyce of Iacob / & to Laban by the seruyce of Ioseph /
 right so / god wol yeue his malisoñ to swiche lordshipes /
 as sustenen the wikkednesse of hire seruantz / but they

pride of Meyne:

[rat or mouse
gnawings... be ...
..... told
the Nor on
..... est neuer
... reped a noure
... rid of [in a
third hand]

come to amendement [444] pride of the table apeereþ ^{[Pride] of the table.}
 eek^t ful ofte / for certes riche men ben clepid to festes /
 and pouere folk^t ben put away & rebuked / [445] ¶ Also
 in excès / of diuerse metes & drynkes / and namely ^{[Exces]se of mete}
 swiche manere bake metes & dissh^tmetes brennyng of
 wilde fyr & peynted & castelled with papir / &
 semblable wast / so þat it is abusioñ for to thynke || [446]
 And eek^t in to gret preciousnesse of vessel / & curiositee
 of Mynstralcie / by whiche / a man is stired the moore / to
 delices of luxure [447] ¶ If so be þat he sette his herte
 the lasse / vp on oure lord Ihu crist^t certeyn it is a
 synne / & certeynly the delices / myghte ben so grete <sup>And yf thou
wyest what thyng
yt were Coneng to
lerne [in a third
hand]</sup>
 in the cas / þat man myghte lightly fallen by hem in to
 dedly synne / [448] ¶ The especes that sourdren of pride /
 soothly whan they sourden of malice ymagyned & auysed /
 & forncast^t or ellis of vsage / ben dedly synnes / it is
 no doute / [449] and whan they sourde by freletee / vn-
 auysed sodeynly / & sodeynly / withdrawe agayn / al be
 they greuouse synnes / I gesse / that they ne be nat
 dedly [450] ¶ Now myghte men axe / wher of þat pryde <sup>[Whe]r of
cometh pryde.</sup>
 sourdeth & spryngeth / And I seye som tyme it
 spryngeth of the goodes of nature / and somtyme of
 the goodes of fortune / & som tyme / of the goodes of
 grace / [451] ¶ Certes the goodes of nature / stonden
 outhur in goodes of body / or goodes of soule || [452] ^{[g]oodes of body}
 Certes / goodes of body / ben heele of body /
 strengthe / delyuernesse / beautee / genterie / franchise
 [453] ¶ goodes of nature of the soule ben good wit^t <sup>[good]es of
the soule.</sup>
 sharpe vnderstondynge / subtil engyn / vertu naturel / good
 memorie [454] ¶ goodes of fortune / ben riches / <sup>[good]es of
fortune.</sup>
 hey degrees of lordshipes / preisynges of the peple [455]
 ¶ goodes of grace / ben Science / power to suffre
 spiritual trauaille / benygnytee / vertuous contemplaciō /
 withstondynge of temptacion ¶ and semblable thynges /
 [456] of whiche forseide goodes / certes it is a ful gret
 folie a man to pryden hym in any of hem alle / [457]

¶ Now as for to speke of goodes of nature / god woot þat som tyme we han hem in nature / as muche to oure damage / as to oure profit [458] ¶ As for to speke of heele of ¹body / certes it passeth ful lightly / & eek it is ful ofte encheson / of the siknesse of the soule / for god woot the flessch is a ful greet enemy to the soule / and therfore / the moore þat the body is hool / the moore be we in peril to falle || [459] Eke for to pryde hym in hys strengthe of body / it is an heigh folye / for certes / the flessch coueiteth agayn the spirit / & ay the moore strong þat the flessch is / the sorer may the soule be / [460] and ouer al this / Strengthe of body & worldly hardynesse / causeth ful ofte many man / to peril & meschaunce || [461] Eke / for to pryde hym of his genterye / is ful gret folie / for ofte tyme / the genterie of the body / bynymeth the genterie of the soule / & eek / we ben alle / of .o. fader & of o moder / & alle we ben of o nature roten / and corrupt bothe riche & pouere / [462] for sothe / o manere gentilrye / is for to preise / that apparayleth mannes corage *with vertues* / & moralitees / & maketh hym cristes child / [463] for truste wel / þat ouer what man þat synne hath maistrye / he is verray cherl to synne

[464] ¶ Now / ben ther general signes of gentilesse / as eschewynge of vice / or rybaudye & *seruage* of synne / in word / in werk / and contenaunce / [465] & vsynge *vertu* / curteisye / & clenness / & to be liberal / that is to seyn / large by mesure / for thilke that passeth mesure / is folye & synne || [466] Another is / to remembre hym of bounte / þat he of oother folk hath receyued || [467] Another is / to ben benygne / to hise goode subgetz / wher fore as seith Senek ther is no thyng moore couenable to a man of heigh estat / than debonairetee & pitee / [468] and therfore thise flyes / þat men clepe bees / whan they maken hire kyng they chesen oon þat hath no prikke / wher with he may styng || [469]

nota

Another is / a man to haue a noble herte & a diligent
to attayne to hye vertuose thynges [470* *see after 474*

& Pet.

.
.
.

[471] Certes also / who þat prydeth hym in the goodes of
fortune / he is a ful gret fool / for som tyme / is a man a
gret lord by the morwe / þat is a kaytif & a wrecche /
er it be nyght [472] and som tyme / the richesse of a man
is cause of his deeth / somtyme the delices of a man / ben
cause of the greuouse maladie / thurgh which he dyeth ||
[473] Certes / the commendacioñ of the peple / is som
tyme ful fals / & ful brotil for to triste / this day they
preise / to morwe they blame / [474] god woot desir to
haue the commendacioñ eek of peple / hath caused deth / to
many a bisy man [*470] ¶ Now certes
a man to pride hym in the goodes of grace / is eek an
outrageous folye / for thilke yiftes of grace / that sholde
haue turned hym to goodnesse¹ and to medicine turneth
hym to venym & to confusioñ / as seyth Seint Gregorie.
[475] ¶ Now sith þat so is / þat ye han
vnderstonde / what is pryde / & whiche ben the speces of
it / & whennes pryde sourdeth & spryngeth ||

[476] Now shul ye vnderstonde / which is the remedie
agayns pride / and that is humylitee / or
mekenesse / [477] that is a vertu / thurgh which / a man
hath verray knoweleche of hym self / & holdeth of hym
self / no pris ne deyntee / as in regard of hise desertes /
considerynge euere his freletee [478] ¶ Now ben ther .iiij. ^{[iiij] maneres of humilite}
maneres of humylitee / As humylitee in herte ¶ Another
humylitee / is in Mouth ¶ the thridde in hise werkes
[479] ¶ The humylitee in herte / is in .iiij. maneres ¶ that
oon is / whan a man holdeth hym self as naught^t worth /
biforn god of heuene || Another is / whan he ne despiseth

noon other man [480] ¶ the thridde is / whan he ne
 rekketh nat' thogh men holde hym noght worth || the
 ferthe is / whan he nys nat sory of his humyliacioñ [481]
 ¶ Also the humylitee of Mouth / is in .iiij. thynges ¶ In
 Atempree speche ¶ and in humblesse of speche || And
 whan he biknoweth *with* his owene Mouth / þat he is
 swich / as hym thynketh þat he is in his herte ¶ Another
 is whan he preiseth the bountee of another man / and
 nothyng ther of amenuseth [482] ¶ Humylitee eek in
 werk is in .iiij. maneres || the firste / is whan he putteth
 othere men biforn hym ¶ the seconde is / to chese the
 loweste place ouer al || The thridde is / gladly to assente
 to good conseil || [483] the ferthe is / gladly to
 stonde to the award of his souereyn / or of hym / þat is hyer
 in degree / certeyn / this is a gret werk of humylitee

𐀀 ¶ Inuidia 𐀀

[484]

After pryde / wol I speke / of the foule synne of Enuye /
 which þat is / as by the word of the philosopre
 Sorwe of oother mannes prosperitee / and after the
 word of Seint Augustyn / it is sorwe of oother mennes
 wele / and ioie of oother mennes harm [485] ¶ This
 foule synne / is platly agayns the holy goost al be it so
 þat euery synne / is agayn the holy goost yet natheles
 for as muche as bountee aperteneth proprely to
 holy goost & enuye cometh proprely of malice / ther
 fore is proprely agayns the bountee of the holy goost
 [486] ¶ Now hath malice .ij. speces / that is to seyn /
 hardnesse of herte in wikkednesse / or ellis the flesh of
 a man is so blynd ¹þat he considereth nat' þat he is in
 synne / or rekketh nat' þat he is in synne / which
 is / the hardnesse of the deuel [487] ¶ That other
 spece of Enuye / is whan þat a man werreyeth trouthe /
 whan he woot' þat it is trouthe / & eek' whan
 he werreyeth / the grace þat god hath yeue to his

neighebore / & al this / is by enuye / [488] Certes /
 thanne is enuye / the worste synne þat is / for soothly /
 alle othere synnes / ben som tyme / agayns o special
 vertu / [489] but certes / enuye is agayns alle vertues /
 & agayns alle goodnesse / for it is sory of alle the
 bountees of his neighebore / & in this manere / it is
 dyuers from alle othere synnes / [490] for wel vnnethe /
 is ther any synne / þat it ne hath / som delit in hym self /
 saue oonly enuye / þat euere hath in hym self / angwissþ &
 sorwe [491] ¶ The speses of Enuye ben thise ¶ Ther is The speses of
E[nuye].
 first^t sorwe of oother mennes goodnesse and of hire pros-
 peritee / and prosperitee / is kyndely matere of Ioye /
 thanne is Enuye / a synne agayns kynde [492] ¶ The
 seconde spece of Enuye / is Ioye of oother mannes harm /
 and that is proprely lyk to the deuel that euere reioyseth
 hym of mannes harm [493] ¶ Of thise .ij. speses comth Bakbitynge
 bakbitynge / and this synne of bakbitynge / or detraccion /
 hath certeyn speses / as thus ¶ Som man preiseth his
 neighebore / by a wikked entente / [494] for he maketh
 alwey a wikked knotte atte laste ende / alwey he
 maketh a .but^t. at the laste ende / þat is digne of moore
 blame / than worth is al the preisyng [495] ¶ The Seconde
 spece is / þat if a man be good / & dooth / or seith a
 thyng^t to good entente / the bakbitere wol turne al thilke
 goodnesse vp so down / to his shrewede entente [496]
 ¶ The thridde / is to amenuse / the bountee of his neighe-
 bore [497] ¶ The ferthe spece of bakbitynge / is this ¶
 that if men speke goodnesse of a man / thanne wol the
 bakbitere seyn / par fey / swich a man / is yet bet than he
 in despreisyng / of hym þat men preise [498] ¶ The
 fifthe spece is / for to consente gladly / and herkne
 gladly / the harm þat men speke of oother folk^t / this
 synne is ful greet^t & ay encreseth / after the wikked
 entente of the bakbitere [499] ¶ After bakbitynge comth Grucchyng.
 grucchyng or Murmuraciō / and som tyme / it spryngeth
 of Inpacience agayns god / & som tyme agayns man

[500] ¶ Agayns god is it whan a man gruccheth agayn
the pyne of helle / or agayns pouerte / or los of catel /
or agayn reyn / or tempest or ellis gruccheth / þat shrewes
han prosperitee / or ellis / for þat goode men han ad-
uersitee / [501] and alle thise thynges / sholde men suffre
paciently / for they comen by the rightful Iugement &
ordinaunce ¹of god [502] ¶ Som tyme / cometh grucchyng of
Auarice / as Iudas grucched agayns the Magdeleyne / whan
she enoynte the heued of oure lord Ihu crist with hire
precious oynement || [503] this manere of murmure is swich
as whan men grucchen of goodneses þat hem selue
doon or þat othere folk doon / of hire owene catel [504]
¶ Som tyme comth Murmure of pryde / as whan Symon
the pharisee / grucched agayn the Magdeleyne / whan
she approched to Ihu crist & weepe at his feet for hire
synnes || [505] And som tyme / it sourdeth of
Enuye / whan men discoueren a mannes harm þat was
pryuee / or bereth hym on hand thyng þat is fals / [506]
¶ Murmur eek is ofte amonges seruantz / þat grucchen /
whan hire souereyns bidden hem to doon leueful thynges /
[507] and for as muche as they dar nat openly with seye
the comandementz of hire souereyns / yet wol they seyn
harm & grucche & murmure pryuely for veray
despit / [508] whyche wordes / men clepe the deueles
pater noster / though so be / þat the deuyl ne hadde
neuere pater noster / but þat lewed folk / yeuen it swich
a name [509] ¶ Som tyme it comth of Ire / or
pryuee hate / þat norisseth rancour in herte / as afterward
I shal declare [510] ¶ Thanne comth eek bitterness of
herte / thurgh which bitterness / euery good dede of his
neighebore semeth to hym bitter / and vnsauoury [511]
¶ Thanne comth discord / þat vnbyndeth alle manere
of frendshipe ¶ Thanne comth scornynge of [. . . .
. no gap in the MS.] his neighe-
bore al do he neuer so wel [512] ¶ Thanne comth
accusyng / as whan man seketh occasiõ to anoyen his

[Bitt]ernesse.

[Dis]corde.

[Sco]rnynge

[Ac]cusinge

neighebores / which þat is lyk^t the craft of the deuel /
 þat wayteth bothe nyght & day to accusen vs alle /
 [513] ¶ Thanne comth Malignitee / thurgh which a man ^{[M]alignite.}
 anoyeth his neighebores pryuely if he may / [514] and if he
 nat ne may / algate / his wikked wil ne shal nat wante /
 as for to brennen his hous pryuely / or enpoysone / or sleen
 hise bestes & semblable thynges /

[*The Remedy against Envy. (No break in MS.)*]

[515] ¶ Now wol I speken of the remedye agayns this foule ^{remedies}
 synne of Enuye ¶ first^t is the loue of god ^{for enuie.}
 principal / and louynge of hym self / & of his neighebores /
 for soothly / that oon ne may nat ben *with* outhen that
 oother / [516] and truste wel / þat in the name of thy
 neighebores / thou shalt vnderstonde / the name of thy
 brother / for certes / alle we haue o fader flesshly & o
 moder / that is to seyn Adam and Eue / & eek o fader
 spirituel / that is god of heuene / [517] thy
 neighebores artow holden for to loue & wilne hym alle
 goodnesse / and therfore seith god / loue thy neighebores as
 thy self / that is to seyn / to sauacion / bothe of lyf / and
 soule / [518] & moore ¹ouer / thou shalt loue hym in
 word / & benygne amonestynge / & chastisynge /
 & conforte hym / in hise anoyes & preyre for hym *with*
 al thyn herte || [519] And in dede / thou shalt loue hym
 in swich wise / þat thou shalt doon to hym in charitee /
 as thou woldest^t þat were doon to thyn owene persone /
 [520] and therefore / thou ne shalt doon hym no damage
 in wikked word / ne harm in his body / ne in his catel /
 ne in his soule by entisyng of wikked ensample [521]
 ¶ Thou shalt nat eek / desiren his wyf^t ne none of hyse thynges
 ¶ Vnderstoond eek^t þat in the name of neighebores / is com-
 prehended his enemy / [522] certes man shal loue his
 enemy for the comandement of god / and soothly / thy
 freend shaltow loue in god || [523] I seye / thyn
 enemy shaltow loue for goddes sake / by his comande-

ment / for if it were resoñ / þat man sholde hate his
 enemy / for sothe / god nolde nat receyuen vs to his loue
 þat ben hise enemys / [524] ¶ Agayns .iiij. manere of
 wronges þat his enemy dooth to hym / he shal doon .iiij.
 thynges / as thus / [525] || Agayns hate & rancour of herte /
 he shal loue hym in herte / || Agayns chidyng & wikked
 wordes / he shal preye for his enemy || Agayns the wikked
 dede of his enemy / he shal doon hym bountee / [526] for
 crist seith / loueth youre enemys / & preieth for hem /
 þat speke yow harm / & eek for hem / þat yow chacen
 and pursuen / and dooth bountee / to hem þat yow haten
 ¶ Lo thus comandeth vs oure lord Ihu crist to do
 to oure enemys / [527] for soothly / nature dryueth vs
 to louen oure frendes / & parfey oure enemys / han
 moore nede to loue / than oure frendes / & they þat
 moore nede haue / certes to hem shal men doon good-
 nesse / [528] and certes in thilke dede haue we remem-
 brance of the loue of Ihu crist þat deyde for hise
 enemys / [529] and in as muche as thilke loue is the
 moore greuous to parfourne / so muche is the moore
 gret the merite / and therefore the louynge of oure
 enemy / hath confounded the venym of the deuel /
 [530] for right / as the deuel is desconfited by humylitee /
 right so is he wounded to the deth / by the loue of oure
 enemy / [531] certes thanne is loue the medicine þat
 chaceth out the venym of enuye fro mannes herte [532]
 the spesces of this passhullen ben moore largely declared / in hire
 chapitres folwyng

¶ Ira

[533]

After Enuye / wol I discryuen the synne of Ire / for
 soothly / who so þat hath enuye vp on his neighebo-
 ranon he wole communely fynde hym matere of
 wraththe / in word or in dede / agayns hym / to whom
 he hath enuye / [534] and as wel / comth Ire of pride /

as of enuye / for soothly / he þat is proud or enuyous /
is lightly wroth

[535] ¶ This synne of Ire / after the discryuyng of
Seint Augustyn / is wikked wil to ben auenged / by
word / or by dede [536] ¶ Ire after the philosophre / is
the feruent blood of man / yquyked in his herte / thurgh
which / he wole harm / to hym þat he hateth / [537] for
certes the herte of man / by eschawfyng & moeuyng of
his blood / wexeth so trouble / þat he is out of alle
Iugement of resoñ // [538] But ye shal vnderstonde /
þat Ire is in two maneres // that oon of hem is good &
that oother is wikke // [539] the goode Ire is / by
Ialowsie of goodnesse / thurgh which / a man is wrooth
with wikkednesse & agayns wikkednesse / and ther-
fore seith a wys / that Ire is bet than pley // [540]
this Ire is *with* debonairetee / & it is wroth *with*
oute bitterness / nat wroth agayns the man / but
wroth / *with* the mysdede of the man / as seith the
prophete Dauid ¶ Irascimini & nolite peccare [541] ¶ Now
vnderstondeth / þat wikked Ire / is in .ij. maneres //
that is to seyn / sodeyn Ire or hastif Ire with oute
auysement & consentynge of his reson / [542] the Menyng
& the sens of this is / þat the reson of a man ne con-
sente nat to thilke sodeyn Ire / and thanne is it venyal //
[543] Another Ire / is ful wikked / þat comth of
felonye of herte auysed / & cast bifore *with* wikked wil
to do vengeance / & ther to his resoñ consenteth / and
soothly / this is dedly synne [544] ¶ this Ire / is so dis-
plesant to god / þat it troubleth his hous / & chaceth the
holy goost out of mannes soule / and wasteth & de-
stroyeth the liknesse of god / that is to seyn / the vertu /
þat is in mannes soule / [545] & put in hym / the lik-
nesse of the deuel / & bynymeth the man fro god / þat
is his rightful lord // [546] this Ire / is a ful gret
plesaunce to the deuel / for it is the deueles forneys /
þat is eschawfed *with* the fyr of helle / [547] for *certes* /

right so as fyr is moore myghty to destroye erthely
 thynges / than another Element: right so Ire is myghty / to
 destroye alle spirituel thynges || [548] Looke / how þat
 fyr of smale gleedes / þat ben almoost dede vnder the Asshen
 wolen quyke agayn / whan they ben touched with
 brymston: right so / Ire wole euere mo quyke agayn /
 whan it is touched by the pryde þat is couered in
 mannes herte / [549] for certes / fyr ne may nat come
 out of no thyng: but if it were first in the same thyng
 naturelly / as fyr is drawen out of flyntes with Steel /
 [550] and right so / as pryde is ofte tyme matere of Ire
 right so is rancour norice & kepere of Ire [551] ¶ Ther is

[¹⁻¹ *Catchwords.* a manere tree
The rest of the
Hengwrt MS. is
gone.]

[² *Christ Church*
MS, leaf 262]

as seith Seint ysidre¹ [²that whan men
 maken fuyr of thilke tree / & couere the coles of it with
 asshen soothly the fuyr of it wole lasten alle a yere or more /
 [552] And right so fareth it of rancour whan it is
 ones receyued in the hertes of somme men: certeyn it wole
 lasten paraurenture. from oon Ester Day vnto anoper
 Ester day & more / [553] But certes thilke man
 is ful fer fro the mercy of god alle thilke while //

[554] In this forseide deuels forneys. ther
 forgen .iiij. shrewys. Pride. that ay bloweth & encreasith
 the fuyr by chidyng & wikked wordes // [555] Thanne
 stante enuye. and holdeth the hote Iren vpon the herte
 of man wit a peyre of longe tonges of longe rancour /
 [556] Thanne stant the synne of Contumelie. or
 strife & chest / & batereth & forgith by vileyns
 repreuynge [557] Certes this cursed synne anoyeth
 bothe to the man hym selfe. & eeke to his neighebores.
 For soothly almoste al the harme that a man
 doth to his neighebores cometh of wrath / [558] For
 certez outrageous wrath dooth al that euer the
 deuyl hym commaundeth / For he ne spareth neyther
 criste ne his moder / [559] And in his out-
 rageous anger and Ire. alas ful many oon
 at that tyme felith in his herte ful wikkedly

bothe of criste & eke his halewys. [560] Is
 nat thys a cursed vice: yis certes alas. It bynemeth
 from man his witte & his reson & alle his debonaire
 lyfe spirituel. that shulden kepe his soule // [561]
 Certes yt bynemeth eke goddis dewe lordeshipe / and
 that is mannes soule. and the loue of his neighebores //
 It stryueþ eke alday agayn treuthe. It reueth hym the
 quiete of his herte. & subuerteth his soule //

[562] Of [I]re comen these stynkyng engendrures /
 Fir[s]te hate. that is olde wrath / discorde thurgh whiche
 a man forsaketh his olde frendee full
 longe / [563] And thanne cometh werre & euery
 maner of wronge that man doth to his neighebores in
 body or in catel // [564] Of this cursedde synne of Ire
 cometh eke manslaughter / And vndirstonde wele *that*
 homycyde *that is manslaughter.* is in diuersewise. Som maner
 of homycyde is spirituel. & som is bodely. [565]
 Spirituel manslaughtre is [i]n .vj. thynges. First by
 hate. as seyth seint Iohn that he that hateth his brother
 is homycyde // [566] homycyde is eke by bakbytyng / of
 whiche bakbiteris seith Salomon / that they han .ij.
 swerdes with wiche they sleen hire neighebores. For
 sootly as wikke is. to by nyme hym his good name / as
 his lyfe // [567] homycide is eke. in yeuynge of wikked
 counseile ¹by fraude / or for to yeue counseile ¹ / to arreyse ^[1] repeated in MS.]
 wrongeful custumes & tailages. [568] of whiche seith

seint ²Salomon / leon rorynge & bere hungry ben lyke to
 the Cruel lordshipes in with holdyng or abreggyng of the
 shipe. or the hire. or of y^e wages of seruantes / or ellys in
 vsure. or in withdrawyng of the Almesse of the pouere folke.
 [569] For whiche the wise man seith. Fedith hym. that
 almoost dieth for hunger / For sothly. but if thou fede hym.
 thou sleyst him // And alle these ben deedly synnes // [570]
 Bodely manslaughter is. whan thou sleyst hym with thy
 tunge // In other manere. as whan thou commaundest to
 slen a man or ellys yeuest hym counseile to slen a

man // [571] Man slaughter in dede? is in .iiij. maners /
 That oon is by lawe Right as a Iustice dampneth
 hym that is coupable to the deeth But late the Iustice
 be ware that he do it rightfully / And that he do it nat
 for delyte to spille blood / but for kepyng of riȝtwys-
 nesse // [572] A nother homycyde is doon for
 necessite. as whan a man sleith a nother in his defendaunt.
 & that he ne may noon other wise escape from his
 owne deeth / [573] But certeynly. if he may escape with-
 oute slaughter of his aduersarie and sleeth hym?
 he dooth synne & he shaH bere penaunce as for deedly
 synne // [574] Eke if a man by caas or aventure shete
 an arwe or caste a stoon with whiche he sleith a man?
 he is homycyde // [575] Eke if a woman by neeligence
 ouerlyth hire childe in hire slepyng. it is homycyde &
 deedly synne // [576] Eke whan man destorbeth con-
 cepcion of a childe / & maketh a woman other barayne
 by drynkyng venemous drynkes. thurgh whiche she may
 nat conceyue / Or sleeth a childe by drynkes or
 ellys putteth certeyn material thynges in hire seere
 places to slee the childe [577] or ellys doth vnkynedly
 synne. by whiche man or woman shedeth hir' nature
 in manere or in place ther as a childe may nat be con-
 ceuyed Or ellys if a woman hath nat conceuyed / & hurte
 hire selfe & sleeth the childe / yet is it homycyde //
 [578] what sey we eke of wymmen *that* morden
 hire children for drede of wordely shame. Certes an
 horrible homycyde //. [579] homycyde is eke if a man ap-
 procheth to a woman be desire of lecherie thurgh whiche the
 childe is perished or ellys smyteth a woman wityngly
 thurgh whiche she leseth hire childe / Alle these ben homy-
 cydes. and horrible dedly synnes // [580] yet comen ther of
 Ire many mo synnes as wele in worde. as in thought And
 in dede / as he that arettith vpon god. or blameth god
 of thyng of whiche he is hym selfe gilty. or dispisith
 god. & alle hise halewis as doon these cursed hasardours

in dyuers cuntres / [581] This curside synne doon they
 whan they felen in hire herte / ful wikedly of god and
 hise halewes // [582] Also whan they treten. vnreuerently
 the sacrement of the holy auter thilke synne is so greet
 that vnnethe may it ben releessed. but that the mercy of
 god passeth alle his werkys it is so grete & he so
 benynge // [583] Than cometh of Ire attray answer /
¹whan a man is sharply a-monested in his shrifte / to for-
 lete synnee [584] thanne wole he be Angry &
 answeere hokrely / And angrely or deffende or excusen
 his synne by vn-stedefastnesse of fleisshe / or ellys he
 dide it for to holde companye with hise felawys / or
 ellys he seith the fende entycead hym / [585] or ellys he
 dyde it for his youthe. or ellys his complexioun. is so
 corageous that he may nat forbere / or ellys it ys his
 destyne as he seith / vnto a certeyn age or ellys he
 seith it comyth hym of gentillesse of his Auncestres.
 & semblable thynges [586] Alle these manere of folke
 so wrappen hem in hire synnes that they ne wole nat
 delyuere hem selfe / for soothly no wight that excuseth
 hem selfe wilfully of hys synne. may nat be delyuered of his
 synne til that he mekely byknoweth his synne // [587]
 Aftir this than cometh sweryng^t that is expresse
 agayn the commaundement of god/ And this byfalleth ofte
 of Angir & of Ire / [588] God seith. thou shalt nat
 take the name of thy lorde god in veyn. or in ydel / Also
 oure lord criste seith by the worde of seint Mathewe
 Mathee 5^{to}. **Nolite iurare omnino.** [589] Ne wolde ye
 nat swere in alle manere. neither by
 heuene! For it is goddis trone / Ne by erthe! For it is the
 benche of his feet! Ne by Ierusalem! for it is the Cite of
 a grete kyng. Ne be thyn heed! For thou maist nat
 make an here white ne blake. [590] But seyth by youre
 word^t ye ye! and nay nay. And what that is more
 it is of yuel. thus seyst crist/ [591] For cristes sake ne swerith
 nat so synfuilly in dismembrynge of Criste by soule /

herte / bones / & body / For certes it semeth /
 that cursed Iewis ne dismembred nat
 ynow the *precious persone* of criste. but ye disembre
 hym more. [592] And if so be that the lawe com-
 pelle yow to swere: than rewle yow aftir the lawe of
 god in youre swerynge. as seith Jeromye .4^{to}. c^o.
Iurabis/ in uerita in iudicio & in iusticia. Thow
 shalt kepe .iiij. condicions. Thow shalt swere in trouthe
 In doom. and in rightwysnesse. [593] This is to seyn /
 Thow shalt swere soth / For euery lesyng is agayns criste/
 For crist is verrey trouthe / And thynke wele thys. *that*
 euery grete swerer nat compelled lawefully to swere:
 the wounde shal nat departe / from his hous. while he
 vseth swiche vnlefuH swerynge / [594] Thow shalt swere
 eke in doom. whan thow art constreyned by thy domes-
 man to witnesse the treuthe || [595] Eke thow shalt
 nat swere for enuye / ne for fauour / ne for mede;
 but for rightwysnesse for declaracioun of it. to
 worshepe of god/ and helpyng of thyn euen
 cristen / [596] And therefore euery man that
 taketh goddis name en ydel / or falsly swereth for
 his mouth or ellys taketh on hym the name of *crist*
 to be called a cristen man / and lyuyth agayns cristes
 lyuyng & his techyng / alle they taken goddes name
 in ydel // [597] looke eke what seith seint Petir
Actuum. 4^{to}. **Non est aliud nomen sub celo.** Ther
 is noon other name seith seint Petir vnder heuen
 yeuen to men in whiche they mowe be saued. that is to
 seyn. but in the name of Ihesu criste / [598] Take kepe eke.
 how that the precious name of criste as seith seint Poule
Ad Philipenses .2. **In nomine ihesu** &c that in the
 name of ihesu ¹euery knee of heuenly creatures / or
 erthely / or of helle: sholde bowe / For it is so holy
 & so worshepfuH that the cursed feend in helle sholde
 tremblen to here it nempned // [599] Than
 semeth it. that men that sweren so horribly / by hys

blessed name / that they despice it more boldely.
than dide the cursed iewys / or ellys the Deuel that
trembleth whan he hereth his name //

[600] Now certis sith that swerynge. but if it be
lawefully doon. is so hily deffended / myche worse is
for swerynge falsely & yet needles //

[601] what seye we eke of hem that Delyte hem
in swerynge or holden it a gentire or a manly dede to
swere grete othes // And what of hem that of verray
vsage. ne cesse nat to swere grete othes / al be the cause
nat woorth a straugh / certis this is horrible synne //

[.] *no gap in the*

MS.] [603] But late vs goo now to thilke horrible sweryng
of adiuracioun & coniuracioun / As doon these fals en-
chaunteour. or Nygromanciens in bacyns full of water. or
in a bright swerde in a sercle or in a fuyr. or in the sholder
boon of a sheepe / [604] I kan natte seyn / but that they
doon cursedly & dampnably agayns criste and alle the
feith of holy chirche //

[605] what sey we of hem. that by-leeuen on
dyuynayles / as by flyght or by noyse of bryddes or of
beestes/or bysort. // Bygeomancye/by dremes/by chirkynge
of houses/ by gnawynge of rattes.
& whiche manere wrecchednesse [606] certes all this
thynke is defended by god & holichirche / For
whiche they accursed til they come to amendement.
that on swiche filthe setten here byleue // [607] Charmes
for woundes or maladie of men / or of bestes / if they
taken any effecte. it may be parauenture that god suffreth
it. for folke sholde yeue the more feith & reuerence to
his name //

[608] Now wole I speke of lesynges / whiche gener-
ally / is fals signifaunce of worde in entente to desceyuen
his euen cristene // [609] Som lesynge is of whiche
there cometh noon auauntage to no wight And som lesynge
turneth to y^e ease or profite of a man / And to

damage of a nother man [610] // Another lesyng
 for to sauē his lyfe or his catel comyth
 of delyte for to lye / in whiche delyte they wille forge a longe
 tale & peynte it with alle circumstaunces. where
 alle the grounde of the tale is fals // [611] Som lesyng
 cometh for he wole sustene his worde Som lesyng
 cometh of rechelnesse / wit outen avisement and sem-
 blable thynges //

[612] late vs now touche the vice of Flatering
 whiche ne cometh nat gladly but for drede. or for couetise //
 [613] Flaterie is generally wrongfull preysynge // Flater-
 ies ben the deuels norices / that norissen hise children.
 with Melke of losengerie / [614] For sothe. Salomon seith.
 that flaterie is wors than detraccioun For somtyme de-
 traccion maketh an hauteyn man be the More humble /
 for he dredeth detraccion // But certes flaterie that maketh
 a man to enhaunsen his herte & his countenance //
 [615] Flaterers ben the deuels enchauntours. For
 they make a man to wene of hym selfe by lyke that he
 is nat lyke. / [616] They ben lyke Iudas that bytraised
 [. *no gap in the MS.*] a man to selle hym
 to his ennemye. that is the deuels // [617] Flaterers ben
 the deuels Chapeleyns that syngen euer placebo.
 [618] I rekene flaterers in the vices of Ire / for ofte
 tyme. if oo man be wrooth with a nother / than wole
 he flaterē som wight to sustene hym in his quarelle //

[619] Speke we now of swiche cursynge / as comyth of
 Irous herte / Malysoun generally may be seyde euery
 maner power of harme swiche cursynge² byreuth man fro
 the reigne of god / As seith seint Poule // [620] And of-
 tyme swiche cursynge³ wrongfully retorneth agayn to
 hym that curseth. as a brid retorneth agayn to his
 owne neste / [621] and ouer alle thynges men ought
 to eschewe to cursen hire children / & yeuen to the deuē
 here engendrure / as ferforth as in hem is / certes it is
 grete perille & grete synne //

²⁻³ wrongly repeated in MS., after³

[622] late vs thanne speke of chidyng & reproches
 whiche ben fuH grete woundes in mannes herte. For
 they vnsowen the semes of Frenshippe in mannes herte.
 [623] For certes vnnethes may a man ben
 accorded with hym that hath hym opynly reuyled &
 repnyed. & desclaundred This is a fuH grymly synne
 as criste seith in the gospel / [624] And take kepe now.
 that he that repreueth his neighebores / outhere he repreueth
 hym by som harme of peyne that he hath on his body /
 as Mesel Croked harlote. or be som synne that he doth //
 [625] Now if he repreue hym by harme of peyne
 than turneth the repref to Ihesu Criste for peyne is
 sente by the rightwis sonde of god / And by his suffraunce /
 be it Meselrie. or Mayme or Maladie // [626] And if he
 repreue hym vncharitably of synne / as thowe dronke-
 lewe harlot & so forth // thanne aperteyneth that
 to the reioysynge of the deuyl / that euer hath ioy
 that men don synne / [627] And certes chidyng may
 nat come but out of a vyleyns herte. For after the
 habundaunce of the herte: speketh the mouth fuH ofte
 [628] And ye shulle vndirstonde / that loke by any way.
 whan any man shaH chastice a nother. that he be ware.
 from chidyng or repreuyng For trewly but if he be
 ware: he may fuH lyghtly quyken the fury of angre & of
 wrath whiche that he sholde quenche & paraurenture.
 sleeth hym that he myght chastice with benyg-
 nyte [629] For as seith seint Salomon. The Amiable tunge is
 the tree of lyfe that is to seyn. of lyfe espirituel / and
 soothly a deslaue tunge sleeth the spirites of hym that
 repreueth / and eke of hym that is repnyed / [630] lo
 what seyth seint Augustyn / ther is no thyng so lyke y^e
 deuyls childe. As he that ofte chideth Seint Poule seith
 eke I seruau^t of god / byhoueth nat to chide. [631] And
 how that chidyng be a veleyns thyng bytwixe alle
 maner folke. yet is it certes ¹moste vncouenable
 bitwixe a man & his wyfe. For ther is neuer reste
 CHRISTCHURCH (for Hengwrt 607) (6-T. 640) [¹ leaf 261, back]

And therfore seith Salomon / An hous that is vnkouered.
 & droppynge / & a chidyng wyfe. ben lyke /
 [632] A man that is in a droppynge hous in many
 places. thow he eschewe the droppynge in oo place.
 it droppeth on hym in a nother place // So fareth it by
 a chydyng wyfe. but she chide hym in oo place / she
 wole chide hym in a nother // [633] And therfore bettre is
 a morsel of brede *with* ioy^e than an housfult of
 delices with chidyng seith Salomon // [634] Seynt
 Poule seith. o ye / women be ye subiettez to youre
 housbondes / as byhoueth in god. And ye men / loueth
 youre wyfes. Ad Colonisenses 3^o. //

[635] Aftirwarde speke we of scornynge. whiche is a
 wikked synne. And namely whan he scorneth a man / for
 hise goode werkys / [636] For certes swiche scorneris
 faren lyke the foule tode that may nat endure to
 smelle the swote sauour of the vyne whan it
 floresseth. [637] These scornors ben partyng felawes
 with the deuel For they han ioye. whan the deuel
 wynneth. & sorwe whan he leseth. [638] For they ben
 aduersaries of Ihesu criste. For they haten that he loueth
 that is to seyn sauacion of soule /

[639] Speke we now. of wikked counseille / For he that
 wikked counseille yeueth is a traitour For he deceyueth
 hym that trusteth in hym. Vt Achitofel ad Absolonem.
 But natheles. yet is his wikked counseille / furste agayns hym
 selfe. [640] For as seith the wise man. euery fals
 lyuyng hathe his proprete in hym selfe that he that
 wole anoye another man he Anoieith firste hym selfe /
 [641] And men shulle vndirstonde that man shalle nat
 take his counseile of fals folke ne of Angry folke or
 greuous folke that louen specially to myche hire owne
 profite ne to inoche wordly folke / namely in counseillynge
 of soules //

[642] Now com^t the synne of hem that sowen &
 maken discorde amonges folke whiche is a synne that

crist hateth outrely // And no wonder ys for he deyde
for to make concorde / [643] And more shame done they to
criste than dide they that hym crucyfyed/ For god
loueth bettre that frendshepe be amonge folke than
he dide hys owne body whiche that he yaf for vnyte.
therefore ben they lykned to the deuel / that euer is
aboute to make discorde //

[644] Now cometh thee synne of dowble tonge. swiche
as speken faire byforn folke and wikkedly byhynde / or
elles they maken semblaunt as thoughe they speke of
good entencioun. or ellys in game & pley & yette they
speke of wikked entente //

[645] Now cometh bywreyng of counseille thurgh
whiche a man is defamed/ certes vnneth may he restore the
damage //

[646] Now comyth Manace that is an open foly./ For
he that often manaceth he threteth more. than he may
performe ful ofte tyme //

[647] Nowe cometh ydel wordes that is with oute
profite of hym that speketh thoo wordes [.
. *no gap in the MS.*] Or elles ydel wordes ben
thoo that ben neodelees or with outen entente of naturel
profite [648] And alle be it that ydel wordes ben som-
tyme venial synne: yet sholde men doute hem. for we
shulle yeue rekenyng of hema byfore god //

[649] Now cometh Ianglynge: that may nat ben wil-
oute ¹synne. And as seith Salomon. it is a signe of a-perte
folye / [650] And therfore A Philosphre seyde whan
men asked hym. how that men sholdee please the people /
And he answerde / Doo many good werkys and speke fewe
Iangles //

[651] After this cometh the synne of Iaperis. that
ben the deuels Apes / For they make folke to laughen at
hire Iaperie as men doon at the gaudes of an ape /
Swiche iapes defendith seint Poul [652] loke how
that vertuous wordes & holy conforten hem

that trauaillen in the seruyse of criste: so conforten
the vileyns wordes & knakkys of Iaperis hem that
trauaillen in the seruice of the deucl / [653] These ben
the synnes that comen of the tonge. that comen of Ire
& of other synnes moo

Remedium contra iram.

[654]
The Remedie agayns Ire is a vertue that men
clepen Mansuetude / that is debonairete And
eke another vertue that men calleth pacience / or
suffraunce /

[655] debonairete *withdrowith* & refreyneth
the sterynges & the meouynges of mannes corage in his
herte in swiche manere/ that they ne skippe nat oute by
angre ne by Ire. [656] Suffraunce suffrith swetely alle
the Anoyaunces & the wronges that men doon to man
outwarde [657] Seint Ierome seith thus of debonairete
that it dooth noon harme to no wight ne seith ne for non
harme that men doon ne seyn. he ne eschawfeth nat
agayns his reson // [658] This vertue somtyme cometh of
nature. /For as seith the Philosophre / A man is a quykke
thyng by nature debonaire & trefable to goodnesse //
But whan debonairete is enformed of grace than is
it the more worth //

[659] Pacience that is a nother remedie agayns Ire
is a vertue that suffereth swetely euery mannes godenesse /
& nat wrooth for noon harme that is doon to hym //
[660] The Philosophre seith that pacience is thilke
vertue that suffreth debonairly alle the outrages of
aduersite. & euery wikked worde // [661] This vertue
maketh a man lyke to god & makyth hym his
owne dere childe as seith criste / This vertue discomfiteth
thyn enemy And therfore seith the wyseman / If thou
wolte venquyssh thyn enemy. lerne for to suffre / [662] And
thow shalte vnderstonde that man suffreth .iiij. manere

of greuauncez & outward thinges/ agayns the whiche .iiij.
he mote haue .iiij. manere of paciencies /

[663] The firste greuaunce is of wikked wordes.
thilke suffred Ihesu criste with outen grucchyng ful
paciently whan the iewes despised hym & reprevd hym
ful ofte / [664] Suffre thow therfore paciently / For the
wise man seith. If thow stryue with a fool. though
the fool be wrooth or thow he laugh / Algate
thow shalte haue no reste [665] // That other greuaunce
outwarde is to haue damage of thy catel / Ther agayns
suffrid criste ful paciently whan he was dispoilled of alle
that he hadde in this lyfe / And that nas but of his clothes
[666] // The thrid greuaunce is a man to haue harme in
his body that suffred criste ful ¹paciently in alle his
passion [667] // The ferthe greuaunce is in outrageous
labour in werkys wherfore I sey that folke that
maken hire *seruauntez* to trauaillen to greuously / or oute of
tyme / as on halidaies: soothly they don grete synne //
[668] here agayns suffred criste ful paciently and
taught vs pacience. whan he bare vpon his blyssed
sholdre the croys / vpon whiche he shulde suffre
dispitous deth // [669] here may men lerne to be
pacienc. For nat oonly cristen men ben pacienc
for loue of Ihesu criste & for gerdon of the blyssful
lyfe that is pardurable // But certes the olde payens that
neuer were cristene. commenden & vseden the vertue
of pacience

[670] A Philosophre vpon a tyme that wolde haue
beten his disciple for his grete trespas For whiche he was
gretly amoued. and broughte a yerde to scourge the
childe / [671] And whan the childe saugh the yerde he
seide to his maister [.
. . . *no gap in the MS.*] for thy correccioun. [672] For sothe
quod the childe / ye oughte firste correcte youre selfe that
han loste al youre pacience / for the gylte of a childe /
[673] Forsoth *quod* the maister al wepynge: thow

seist sooth! haue thow the yerde my dere sone & correcte me for myn impacience // [674] Of pacience cometh obedience thurgh whiche a man is obedient to criste & to alle hem to whiche he ought ben obedient to criste // [675] And vndirstonde wele that obedience is parfite whan that a man dooth gladly & hastyly *with goodl.* herte entierly. al that he shold doo. [676] Obedience generally is to performe the doctrine of god & of his souereyn to whiche hym ougte to ben obeissaunt in alle rightwisnesse

. De accidia ./

[677]

Aftyр the synne of Envyе and Ire! now wole I speke of thee synne of Accidie. For Enuye blyndeth the herte of a man & Ire trobleth a man. And Accidie maketh hym heuy thoughtfull & wrawe. [678] Enuye & Ire maken bitternesse in herte / which bitternesse is moder of accidie / And bynemeth hym the loue of alle goodnesse / Thanne is accidie the Angwisshe of troubled herte. As seith seint Austyn seith / It is anoye of goodnesse. & anoye of harme [679] / Certes this is a dampnable synne / for it dooth wronge to ihesu criste in as moche as it bynemeth the seruyce that men oughte doon to ihesu criste with alle diligence. as seith Salomon // [680] But Accidie dooth no swiche diligence. he dooth all thyngе with a noy. and with wrawnesse. And excusacioun. And with ydelnesse & vnluste / For whiche the book seith / A-cursed be he. that dooth the seruyce of god neeligently [681] Thanne is Accidie enemy to euery estaat of man. For certes thestaat of man is in .iiij. maners // [682] Outher it is thestaat of Innocence / as was thestaat of Adam byforn that he felle in-to synne / in whichee estaat he was holden too wirche / as in heringe / And Adowrynge of god // [683] Another estaat is thestaat of synfuH men / in whiche estat men ben holden

to labour in preyng to god for amendement of hire synnes / & that he wole graunte hem to ryse oute of hire synnes [684] ¹A nother estaat is the estaat of grace. in whiche estaat he is holde to werkes of penytence / And certes to alle these thynges. is Accidie enemye & contrarie. For he loueth no besynesse at al // [685] Now certes this foule synne / Accie is eke a ful grete enemye to the lyfode of the body / For it ne hath noo purueaunce agayns temporel necessite For it forslewith & forsluggeth & destroieth alle goodes temporels by rechelesnesse //

[686] The .iiij. thyng is that Accidie is lyke hem / that ben in the peyne of helle. by cause of hir sleuthe / & of hire heuynesse / For they that ben dampned ben so bounde/ that thay may neyther wele doo ne thynke // [687] Of Accie cometh first that a man is anoyed & encombred for to do any goodnesse / & maketh that god hath abhomynacioun of swiche Accidye //

[688] Now cometh sleuth that wil nat suffre. non hardnesse ne no penaunce / For soothly slouth ys so tendre & soo delicate. as seith Salomon / that he wole nat suffre noon hardnesse / ne penaunce / And therefore he shendeth al that he dooth [689] agayns this roten herted synne of Accidie & slouth sholde men exercise hem selfe & vse hem selfe to don good werkes / and manly & vertuously cacchen corage wele to doon thenkyng that oure lord Ihesu criste quyteth euery good dede / be it neuer so lite [690] vsage of labour. is a greet thyng. for it maketh as [s]eith Seint Bernarde the laborer to haue stronge armes & harde synwes / & slouth makith hem feble & tendre // [691] Than cometh drede to begynne to werke any good werkes / for certes he that is enclyned to synne / hym thinketh it is so greet an Emprise for to vndirtake to doon werkes of goodnesse / [692] and casteth in his herte that the

circumstaunces of goodnesse ben so greuous & so chargeant for to suffre / that he dar nat vndirtake to do werkes of goodnesse As seith seint Gregorie

[693] Now cometh wanhope that is despeire of the mercy of god that comyth somtyme of to moche outrageous sorwe / And somtyme of to moche drede ymagynge that he hath do so myche synne. that it wole nat auaille hym though he wolde repente hym / & forsake synne / [694] thurgh whiche despaire or drede / he habawndonethalle his herteto every manersynne / Asseith seint Augustyn / [695] whiche dampnable synne / if that it contynue vnto his ende / it is cleped synnyng in the holy goost // [696] This horrible synne is so perilous. that he that is despeired / ther nys no felonye ne no synne that he douteth for to doo / As shewed wele be Judas / [697] certes a bouen alle synnes. than is this synne moste displeaunt to criste & moste & moste¹ aduersarie [698] Sothely / he that despeireth hym. is lyke the coward Champion recreaunt that seith creant with oute nede / Allas allas. . nedeles . is he recreaunt & nedeles despeired / [699] Certes the mercy of god is euer redy to y^e penytent And is. a-bouen alle his werkys. [700] Allas kan nat a man by-thynken hym on the gospel of seint luke .15. Where as criste seith / that as wele shalle ther be ioye in heuene vpon a synfull man *that* dooth penitence / than vpon. 90 & 19 rightfull men that [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] neden noo² penitence / [701] loke forther in the same gospel / the ioye & the feste of thee good man that hadde loste his sone / whan his sone with repentaunce was retourned to his fader [702] kan they nat remembre hem eke that as seith seynt luke .23. how that the theef / that was hanged by syde Ihesu criste seyde / lord remembre of me. whan thou comest into thy reigne. [703] For sethe seyde criste I sey to the. to day shalt thou be with me in paradys / [704] Certes ther is noon so horrible synne of

[¹ sic]

man that it ne may in his lyfe be destroyed by penitence.
 thurgh vertue of the passioun & of the deeth of crist
 [705] Allas what nedeth man thanne to ben despeired.
 sith that his mercy so redy is & large / axe & haue //
 [706] Thanne cometh sompnolense. that is sluggish
 slombrynge whiche maketh a man be heuy & dulle in
 body & in soule // & this synne cometh of sleuth /
 [707] And certes the tyme that by wey of reson men
 sholde nat slepe that is by the morwe / but if there were
 cause / resonable [708] for soothly the morwe tyde is
 moste couenable / a man to sey his preiers and for
 to thynke on god / & to honour god / & to
 yeuen almesse to the poore / that firste cometh in the name
 of criste / [709] loo what seith Salomon / who so wole
 by the morwe a-wake & seke me / he shalle fynde
 [710] Thanne cometh necligence or rechele[s]nesse.
 that rekketh of no thyng /. and how that ignoraunce be
 moder of alle harme / certes necligence is the Norice /
 [711] Necligence ne doth noo force whan he shaHl doon
 a thyng whether he do it wele or baddely //

[712] Of the remedye of these twoo synnes as seith
 the wyse man that he that dredeth god / he spareth nat
 to doon that hym oughte doon. [713] & he that loueth
 god: he wole doon diligence to plesse god to his werkis and
 a-bawndone hym selfe with alle his myght wele for to doon /
 [714] Than cometh Idelnesse that is the yate of alle
 harmes / An ydel man is lyke a place that hath no
 wallys the deuels may entre on euery syde / or sheet
 at hym ad diskouerte by temptacion on euery syde /
 [715] This ydelnesse is the Thurrok/ of alle wikked and
 vileyns. and of alle Iangles truffles / and of
 alle ordure / [716] Certes the heuen is yeuen to hem that
 wole labouren & nat to ydel folke / Eeke Dauid seith
 that they ne be nat in the laboure of men ne they shulle
 nat be whipped with men that is to seyn in purgatorie /

[717] certes thanne semeth it they shulle be turmentyd
with the del in helle. but if they doo penitence /

[718] Than cometh the synne that men clepe
Tarditas / as whan a man is to laterede or tariynge er
he wole turne to god / And certes that is a grete folye /
he is lyke to hym that falleth in the dicke / & wole nat
aryse / [719] And this vice comyth of a fals hope / that
he thynketh / that he shalle lyue longe / but *that* hope
failleth ful ofte //

[720] Thanne cometh lachesse / that is he / that whan he
begynneth any good werke anoon he shall forlete it and
stynte as doon they that han any wight to gouerne /
and ne taken of hym no more kepe / Anoon as they fynden
any contrarie / or any anoye // [721] These ben the newe
shepehurdes that leten hire shipe wytyngly to renne to
the wolfe that is in the breris / or do no force of hire owne
gouern¹naunce / [722] Of this cometh pouerte / and destruccion
bothe of spirituelle & temporelle thynges / Thanne cometh
a maner cooldnesse that freseith alle the herte of man //

[723] Than comyth vndeoucion thurgh whiche a man is
blente As seith seint Bernard / & hath swiche langour in
soule that he may neither rede ne synge in holy chirche.
ne here ne thynke of noo deuocion ne trauaille with
his handes in noo good werke that it nys to hym vnsauory /
And alle appalled / [724] thanne waxeth he slow &
slombry / And so is enclyned
to hate & to Enuye // [725] thanne comyth the synne of
wordly sorwe. swiche as is cleped *Tristicia*. that sleeth
man as seith seint Poule / [726] For certes swiche sorwo
wercheth to the deeth of the soule / and of the body also /
Forther of cometh / that a man is anoyed of his owne lyfe /
[727] wherfore swiche sorwe shorteth ful ofte the lyfe of
a man er that his tyme by come by wey of kynde

Remedium contra peccatum accidie

A [728] gayns this horrible synne of Accidie & the braunches of the same that is a vertue that is called Fortitudo. or strenght that is an affeccion thurgh whiche aman despiseth a noyous thyng // [729] This vertue is so myghty and so vigorous / that it dar withstonde myghtely & wisely kepe hym from periles that ben wikked / and wrastle agayns the assawtes of the deuel / [730] for it enhaunceth & enforceth the soule right as Accidie a-batith it and maketh it feble / For this Fortitudo may long endure by longe suffraunce. the trauailles that ben couenable //

[731] This vertue hath many spices // The firste is cleped magnanymite / that is to seyn grete corage [. . . . no gap in the MS.] agayns Accidie / leste that it ne swolwe the soule / by the synne of sorwe. or destroye it by wanhope / [732] This vertue maketh folke vndirtake harde thynges & greuouse thynges by hire owne wille. wisely and resonabely / [733] And for as mychel as the deuel fytteth agayns a man more by queyntyse and by sleight than by streght: therfore men shalle withstande hym by witte & by reson & by discrecion [734] Thanne Arnd there the vertues of Feith & hope in god: and in his seintz to acheue & complice the good werkys whiche he purposeth fermely to contynue // [735] Thanne cometh seuerite or sikernes & that is whan a man ne douteth no trauaille in tyme comynge of the good werkes that a man hath bygonne // [736] Than cometh magnificence / that is to seyn whan a man dooth & perfourmeth grete werkes of goodnesse And that is the ende why that men sholde doo gode werkys / For in the Accomplysynge of grete gode werkys. lyth the grete gerdoun [737] Thanne is there Constaunce that is stablenesse of corage / And this sholde ben in herte by stedeuast feith / And in mouth / and in

berynge & in chere / & in dede / [738] Eke ther ben
 more special remedies agayns Accidie in dyuers werkys.
 And in consideracions of the peynes of helle¹ and of the
 ioyes of heuene / And in the truste of the grace of the holy
 goost^t that wole yeue hym myght to performe ys good
 entente.

De Auaricia

A [739]
 ftyr Accidie wole I speke of Auarice / & of
 couetise / of whiche synne / seith seint Poule /
 that the rote of alle harmes ys couetise / Ad
 Thimoth. 6^{to}. [740] For soothly whan the herte of
 mar is confounded in it selfe & trowble / and that the
 soule hath loste the comfort of god than seketh he an
 ydel solace of wordly thynges

[741] // Auarice aftir the descripcioun / of seint Augustyn
 is lykerous in herte to haue erthely thynges /
 [742] som other folke seyn *that* auarice is for to
 purchace many erthely thynges. & no thyng yeue
 to hem that han nede // [743] And vndirstonde that
 Auarice ne stant nat in londe ne catel. but som-
 tyme in science & in glorie. & in euery maner
 outrageous thyng. is Auarice & couetise / [744] And
 the difference bitwix Auarice & couetise is this / Couetise is
 this / Couetise is for to coueit swiche thynges as thow
 haste nat / And Auarice is for to with-holde & to kepe swiche
 thynges as thow haste with oute rightful nede / [745] Soothly
 this Auarice is a synne that is full dampnable / For alle holy
 writte curseth it / And speketh agayns that vice. For it dooth
 wronge to Ihesu criste / [746] For it byreueth hym the loue
 that men to hym owen. & turneth yt bakwarde agayns
 alle reson. [747] and makith that the Auaricious man
 hath more hope in his catel. than in Ihesu criste. and
 doeth more obseruaunce & kepyng of his tresore than
 hedoth to the seruyse of Ihesu criste / [748] And therfore seith

seint Poul Ad Ephesios .5^{to}. that an auaricious man is
the thraldom of ydolatrie

[749] What difference is bitwixe an ydolastre / and
an auaricious man / but that an ydolastre *paraurenture*
ne hath but oo mawment or twoo And the Auaricious man
hath manye / For certes euery Floryn in his Coffre / is hys
Mawment / [750] And certes the synne of Mawmientrie is
the firste thyng / that god deffended in the ten *commaund-*
ement as berith witnesse in Exodi c°. 20. [751] Thow
shalte haue no fals goddis bifore me / ne thow shalte make
to the noo graue thyng Thus is an Auaricious man that
loueth his tresore byforn god and ydolastre [752] thurgh
his cursed synne of Auarice // Of Couetise comen his
harde lordshipes. thurgh whiche men ben destreyned
by taylages / customes & cariages moore than hire
duete or reson is / And eke take they of hire bonde
meh *Amercymantz* whiche myghte moore rightfully ben
cleped extorcions than *Mercymantz* [753] Of whiche
mercymantz and *raunsonynge* of bonde men / *somme*
lordes stywardes. seyen that it is rightfu^{ll} / for as myche as
a cherle hath no temporel thyng that it ne is his lordes
as they seyn // [754] But certes these bysshops don^o
¹wronge that byreuen hire bonde folke thynges that they
neuer yaf hem *Augustinus de civitate libro .9°*. // [755]
Sooth is that the condicion of thraldom. & the firste
cause of thraldom is for synne *Genesis .9°*.

[756] thus may yee sen that the gilte disserued
thraldom / but nat nature / [757] wherfore these lordes
ne sholde nat myche glorifie hem in hire lordships
sith that be naturel condicion they ben nat lordes ouer
thralles / but that thraldome comyth firste by the diserte of
synne // [758] And forther ouer / ther as the lawe seith
that temporel godes of bonde folke ben the goodes
of hire lordshipes / ye that is for to vndirstonde the godes
of the Emperour / to deffenden hem in here right. but nat
for to robben hem ne reuen hem / [759] And therefore

seith Seneca / Thy prudence shulde lyue benignely with
thy thralles [760] [. *no gap in the MS.*]
ben goddes peple / For humble folke / ben cristes freendes.
they ben contubernial with the lorde //

[761] Thenke eke that of swiche seed [.
no gap in the MS.] springen lordes / as wele may
the cherle be saued as the lorde / [762] [.
no gap in the MS.] wherefore I
rede do right so with thy cherle. as thow woldest that
thy lorde dide with thee / if thow were in his plyght //
[763] Euery synfuþ man is a cherle to synne / I rede
thee certes that thow lorde werke in swiche wise with
thy cherles. that they rather loue the than drede // [764]
I woot wele ther is degre a-boue degre. as reson
is and skille is that men do hyre deuoire ther as it is dewe /
But certes extorcions & despite of youre vnderlynges is
dampnable //

[765] And forther ouer vnderstonde wele that
conquerours or tirauntz maken ful ofte thralles of
hem that ben borne of as roial blood as ben they that
hem conqueren / [766] This name of Cherldom was
neuer erste kouthe til that Noe seide that his sone
Canaan sholde be thralle to hise bretheren for his synne //
[767] What seye we thanne of hem thatte pilen & doon
extorcions to holy chirche / Certes the swerde thatte
men yeuen firste to a knyght. whanne he is newe dubbed
signifieth that he sholde deffende holy chirche / and
nat robbe it ne pile it And whoo so dooth is traitour
to criste / [768] And as seith seint Augustyn. they ben
the deuels wolues that stra[n]glen the sheepe of ihesu
criste. And doon worse than wolues / [769] For soothly
whanne thee wolfe hath fuþ his wombe. he stynteth to
strangle his sheepe But soothly the pilours and destroi-
ours of holy churches godes. ne doo nat soo. For they ne
stynte neuer to pille haue they neuer so myche [770] Now as I
haue seide. sith so is that synne was firste cause of thraldom:

than is it thus that thilke tyme. that alle this world was in synne: than was al this world thraldom & subieccioun [771] but certes sith the tyme of grace cam / god ordeyned / that som folke sholde be more highe in estaat & in degree. and some folke more lowh / and that eueriche sholde be serued in estaat [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] [772] And therfore in som cuntres ther they bien thralles whan they han tur'ned hem to the feyth: they make hire thralles free oute of thraldom / And therfore certes the lorde oweth to his man: that the man that the man oweth to his lorde / [773] The pope calleth hym selfe seruaunt of the seruantez of god: but for as moche as the estate of holy chirche ne myghte nat han be / ne the comune profite myght nat han be kepte ne pees & reste in erthe but if god hadde ordeyned that som man had hier degree & som men lower. [774] therfore was souereynete ordeyned to kepe & mayntene. and defende hire vnderlynges or hire subgetz in reson / as ferforth as lieth in here power / And nat to destroy hem / ne confounde / [775] Wherfore I seye of thilke lordes. that ben like wolues that deuouren the possessions or the catel of pouere folke wrongfully. with outen mercy or mesure: [776] they shulle receyuen by the same mesure that they han mesured to pouere folke the mercy of Ihesu criste but if it be amended // [777] Now comyth deceite betwix Merchaunt & Merchaunt. And thow shalte vnderstonde / that merchaundise is in many maners / that oon is bodely / and that other is gostely // That oon is honeste & leuefuH & that other deshoneste & vnleuefuH // [778] Of thilke bodely merchaundise that is leuefuH and honeste is this / that there as god hath ordeyned that a regne / or a cunte is suffisaunt to hym selfe: than is it honeste & leuefuH / that of habundaunce of this cunte that men helpe another cunte that is more nedy // [779] And therfore ther mote ben Merchauntz to brynge fro that oo cunte to that other hire Merch-

aundisez // [780] That other Merchaundise that men
 haunte with fraude or trecherie & deceite with
 lesynges & fals ooths. is cursed & dampnable //
 [781] Espirituel Merchaundise is proprely Symonye
 that is ententyfe desire to bye thyngo espirituel / that is
 thyng that aperteneth to the seintuarie of god & to
 cure of the soule / [782] This desire if so be that a
 man doo his diligence to performe it / al be it that his
 desire ne take noon effecte yet is it to hym a deedly
 synne / and if he be ordred. he is irregular // [783] Certes
 Symonye is cleped of Symond Magus that wolde han
 boughte for temporel catel the yefte that god hadde yeuen
 by the holy goost to seint Peter and to the Apostles.
 [784] And therefore vndirstonde. that bothe he *that*
 selleth. & he that bieth thynges espirituels. ben
 cleped Symony als / be it by catel. be it be procurynge
 or be fleishly preiere of hise frendis /
 or espirituel frendes / [785] Fleisly in two maners
 as by kyn-rede. or other frendes / Sothly if they praye
 for hym that is nat worthy and able / it is symonye. if he
 take the benefice / & if he be worthy and able: ther
 nys noon // [786] That other maner is. whan man or
 woman praien for folke to auuncen hem oonly. For
 wikke fleishly affeccoun¹ that they han vnto the persones /
 And that is foule Symonye / [787] but certez in seruyse
 for whiche men yeuen thyng espirituel. vnto hire
seruauntz. it mote ben vndi[r]stande / that the seruise
 mote be honeste & ellys / nat / And eke that it be
 with oute bargaynyng / and that the persone be able /
 [788] For as seith seint Damasye / alle the synnes of the
 worlde at regarde of this synne / arn as a thyng of naught
 for it is y^e gretteste synne that may be. after the synne
 of lueyfer & of Antecriste [789] for by this synne god
 forleseth the chirche & the soule *that* he bought with
 his precious blood by hem that yeuen chirches to hem
 that ben nat digne / [790] For they putten. In thevys that

stelen the soules of ihesu criste & destroien his patri-
 moygne [791] by swiche vndigne prestes & curatz
 halewed men han the lesse reuerence of the sacramentz of
 holy chirche & swiche yeueris of chirches putten oute
 the children of criste and putten into the chirche the
 deuels owne sone / [792] they sillen the soules
 that lambes shulde kepen to the wolfe that strangleth
 hem // And therfore shulle they neuer han parte
 of the pasture of lambes *that is the blysse of*
heuene // [793] Now comyth hasardric with hise apur-
 tenaunces. as tables. Rafles. of which deceite
 fals oothes / chidynges / and alle rauynes / blasphemynge
 & reneiynge of god / and hate of his neighebores / waaste
 of goodes / mysdespendynge of tyme / & somtym man-
 slaughtre // [794] Certes hasardours ne mowe nat ben
 with outen grete synne // [. . . *no gap in the MS.*] [795]
 Of Auarice / comenেকেlesynges / thefte & fals witnessse and fals
 oothes / And yeshulle vndirstonde that these ben grete synne.
 & expresse agayn the commaundementz of god as I haue
 seyde [796] Fals witnessse is in worde & eke in dede.
 In worde: as for to bireue thy neighebores good name
 by thy fals witnessynge or birefe hym his catel or his
 heritage by fals witnesseng^t whan thowe for ire or
 for mede. or for enuye birefte fals witnessse / or accusest
 hym or excusest hym by thy fals witnessse / or ellys ex-
 cusest thy self falsly / [797] Ware yow questemongers and
 Notaries. Certes thurghe fals witnessyng was Susanna in ful
 grete sorwe and peyne. & many a nother moo // [798] The
 synne of thefte is eke expresse agayns goddis heste. & that in
 two maners / corporel or spirituel [799] [Corporel]
 as for to take thy neighebores catel agayns his wille /
 by it by force / or by sleighte / be it by mete or by mesure
 [800] by stelynge eke of fals enditementz vpon hym. &
 in borwyng of thy neighebores catel / in entente neuer
 to paie. & semblable thynges // [801] Es-
 spirituel thefte is sacrilege that is to seyn hurt-

ynge of holy thynges or of thynges sacred to criste in twoo
maneris by reson of the holy place. as chirches or
chirchhawes. [802] For whiche euery vyleyns synne that
men doon in swiche places may be cleped sacrilege or
euery violence in the semblable places // Also they that
withdrawe falsly the rightes that longen to holy
chirche [803] & plainly & generally sacrilege
is to reue holy thyng fro holy place / or vnholly
thyng oute of holy ¹place / or holy thyng oute of vn-
holly place

Remedium contra peccatum auaricie

[804]

Now shulle ye vndirstonde / that the releuyng of
Auarice / is misericorde & pite largely taken /
And men myght axe why that misericorde & pite
is releuyng of auarice // [805] Certes the Auari-
cious man sheweth no pite ne misericorde to the nedefull
man. For he deliteth hym in kepyng of hys tresore.
and nat in the rescowyng ne releuyng of hys euene
cristene / And therefore speke I firste of Misericorde //
[806] Thanne is misericorde as seith the Philosophie
a vertue. by whiche the corage of a man is sterid by the
myseise of hym that is myseised / [807] vpon whiche
Misericorde folwith pite in perfourmyng of charitable
werkys of Misericorde / [808] And certes thise
moeuen man to the Misericorde of ihesu criste that yaf
hym self for oure gilte & suffred deeth for Misericorde.
& forgaf vs original synnes / [809] and therby
relessed vs fro the peyne of helle. & amenused thee
peyne of purgetorie. by penitence / And yeueth grace
wele to doo and at the laste. the ioy of heuene // [810] The
spices of Misericorde ben as for to lene. & for to
yeue. & eke for to yeue & relese. & for to han-
pite in herte. & compassion of the myschefe of his

euene cristene / and eke chastise ther as nede is //
 [811] A nother maner of remedie agayns Auarice is
 resonable largesse / But soothly here byhoueth the con-
 syderacion of the grace of ihesu criste. and of his
 temporel goodes eke & of the goodes *perdurables*
 that criste yaf vs / [812] & eke to han remembraunce of
 the deeth that he shal receyue. he noot whanne.
 & eke that he shal forgoon al that he hath.
 saue oonly that he hath despended in good werkys //

[813] But for as myche as som folke ben vn Mesur-
 able. men oughte eschewe fool largesse that men
 clepen waaste // [814] Certes he *that* is fool large. ne
 yeueth nat his catel but he leseth his catel / Soothly
 what thyng that he yeueth for veyn glorie / as to
 Mynstrals / & to folke for to beren his renoun in the
 worlde / he hath synne & noon almesse /
 [815] certes he leseth firste hys godes. that ne seketh
 with the yefte of his good / nothynge but synne /
 [816] he is lyke to an hors that seketh rather to drynke
 drouy or trowble water than for to drynkee water of the
 clere welle / [817] And for as myche as they yeuen. there
 as they shulde nat yeuen. to hem aperteyneth thilke
 malison that criste shaH yeue at the day of dome to
 hem that shullen be dampned

.De .Gula./

A [818]
 fter Auarice comyth Glotonye. whiche is expresse **Gula**
 eke a-geyn the commaundement of god // Glotonye
 is vnmesurable appetyte to ete or to drynke. or ellys
 to doon y-now to the vnmesurable appetyt & desordeyne
 couetise to ete or to drynke / [819] This synne ¹This synne
 corrupped al this world / as is wele shewed in the synne of
 Adam & of Eue. loo eke what seith seint Poule of
 glotonye / [820] Many seith seint Poule goon / of whiche

I haue ofte seyde to yow / And now I seye it wepynge
 / that ben the enemys of the croys of criste / of
 whiche the ende is deeth / and of whiche hire wombe is
 hire god. and hir glorie / & in confusion of hem / that so
 deuouren erthely thynges / [821] he that is vsaunt to
 this synne of glotonye: he ne may no synne withstonde /
 he mote ben in seruage of alle vices / for it is the deuyles
 horde / ther he rideth hym & resteth / [822] this
 synne hath many spices // The firste is dronkenesse
 that is the horrible sepulchre of mannes reson / And ther-
 fore whan a man is drunken. he hath loste his reson. and
 this is deedly synne / [823] But soothly whan that a
 man is nat wonte to stronge drynke. & perauenture ne
 knoweth nat the strengthe of the drynke or hath feblesse
 in his heed or hath trauailed / thurgh whiche he drynketh
 the more. al be he sodenly caught with drynke. it is no
 deedly synne / but venial // [824] The secounde spice of
 glotonye is: that the spirite of a man wexeth alle trouble
 for dronkenesse bireueth hym the discrecioun of his witte //
 [825] The thridde spice of glotonye is. whan a man
 devowreth his mete. & hath no rightfull maner of etyng
 [826] The ferthe is. whanne thurgh the grete habun-
 daunce of his mete / the humours in his body ben des-
 tempered // [827] The fifte is. foryetilnesse be to mychel
 drynkyng. for whiche somtyme a man forgeteth er the
 morwe // what he dyde at euen or on the nyght byfore //

[828] In other maner ben distynte the spices of
 Glotonye affir seint Gregorie // The firste is for to ete bi-
 foren tyme to ete // The secounde is whan a man gete hym
 no delicate mete or drynke // [829] The thridde is. whan
 men taken to myche ouer mesure // The fourthe is
 Curiosite / with grete entente to make & apparaillen
 his mete // The fifte is for to ete to gredely // [830] These
 ben the v. fyngers of the deuels hande / by whiche
 he drawith folke to synne

¶ *Remedium contra peccatum gule*

[831]

Agayns glotonye is the remedie. Abstynence as
seith Galien. but that holde I nat meritorie. if
he do it oonly for hele of the body / Seint
Augustyn wole that Abstynence doon for vertue &
with pacience / [832] Abstynence he seith. is litelle woorth.
but if a man haue good wille therto / and but it be enforced
by pacience & by charite & that men doon it for
goddis sake & in hope to haue the blysse of heuene //

[833] The felawes of Abstynence / ben attemper-
aunce that holdeth the mene in alle thynges / Eke
shame that escheweth alle deshoneste / Suffisaunce that
siketh no riche metes ne drynkes ne dooth no fors of to
outrageous apparaillynge of metis / [834] Mesure also
that restreyneth by reson the deslauee appetit of etynge /
Sobrenesse also that restreyneth the outrage of drynke /
[835] Sparynge also that restreineth the delicate ease to
sitte longe at his mete. and softly / wher fore somme folke
stonden at hire owne wille to eten atte lasse leyser

¹.*De luxuria.* /

[836]

After Glotonye. thanne cometh leccherie / For these
two synnes ben so nygh Cosyns that ofte tyme
they wole nat departe / [837] God wote this
synne is ful displeaunt to god / for he seide hym
selfe. doo no leccherie / And therfore he putte grete peynes
agayns thys synne in the olde testament. [838] If wom-
an thralle. were taken in *this* synne. she sholde be
beten with staues to the deth / And if shee were a gentil-
woman. she sholde be slayn with stones / And if she
were a bisshopes doughter. she sholde be brente by
goddess commazndement // [839] Forther ouer by the
synne of leccherie god dreinte alle *the* worlde. at the

diluge / And aftir that he brente .v. Citees with thonder
lyght. & sonke hem into helle //

[840] Now late vs speke thanne of thylke stynkyng
synne of lecherie that men clepe avoutrie of weddide
folke that is to seyn. if that oon of hem be weddyd.
or ellys bothe [841] Seint Iohn seyth / that auowtiers
shullen ben in helle in a stanke brennyng of fuyr &
of brymston [. *no gap in the MS.*] for the
stynke of hire ordure // [842] Certes the brekyng of
thys sacrement. is an horrible thyng. It was makid of
god hym selfe in paradys. and confermed by Ihesu criste as
witnesseth seint Mathew in the gospel. 19. A man shal lete
Fader & Moder & takyn hym to his wyfe. & they
shuln ben twoo in oo fleiss [843] This sacrament betoke-
neth the knyttyng to-gidre of criste & of holy chirche.
[844] And nat oonly that god forbade avoutrie in dede.
but eke he commaunded / that thow sholdest nat coueite thy
neighebores wyfe [845] In this heste seith seint
Augustyn. is forbidden alle manere couetise to doon
lecherie / loo what seith seint Mathewe .v°. in the gospel / that
who seeth a woman to couetise of hys luste he hath
doon lecherie with hire in his herte. [846] here may ye
sen / that nat oonly the de dede of *this* synne is forbidden /
but eke the desire to doon that synne // [847] Thys cursed
synne anoieth greuously hem that it haunten And firste
to hire soule / For he obligeth it to synne & to peyne of
deth that is *perdurable* / [848] vnto the body anoieth
it greuously also / For it drieth hym & wasteth / and
shente hym / and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the
fende of helle / It wasteth eke his catel / and his substaunce
[849] and certes yef it be a foule thyng a man to wasten
his catel on wommen: yet is it a fouller thyng whan that
for swiche ordure wommen despenden vpon men hire catel
& substaunce // [850] Thys synne as seith the prophete
byreueth man & woman hire good fame & alle hire
honour. And it is full plesaunt to the deuyl / For therby

wynneth he the moste partie of this worlde /
 [851] And right as a Merchaunt deliteth hym moste
 in chafare that he hath moost auzuntage of/ right
 so deliteth the fende in this ordure /

[852] This is that other [hond] of the deuel with .v.
 fyngers to cacche the peple to this vileynye // [853] The
 firste fynger is the fool lokynge of the fool womman.
 and of the fool man that sleeth right as the basilicok/
 sleeth folke / by the venym of hys ¹syght for the couetise
 of the eyen / folwen the couetyse of the herte // [854] The
 secound fynger is the vyleyns touchynge in wicked
 manere / And therefore seith seint Salomon. that who so
 toucheth and handleth a woman he fareth lyke hym
 that handleth the Scorpion that styngeth & sodeinly
 sleeth thurgh his enuenemyng / as who so touchith
 warme piche. hit shent hise fingres // [855] The thridde is
 fool wordes. that farith lyke fuyr that right anoon
 brenneth the herte // [856] The ferthe fynger. is the
 kyssynge / And trewely he were a greet fool that wolde
 kysse the Mouth of a brennyng Ouene. or of a Forneis
 [857] And more fooles ben they that kyssen in vileynye /
 For that Mouth is the Mouthe of helle / And namely this
 olde Dotardes holors yet wole they kysse: thogh
 they may nat doo. & smatre hem / [858] Certes they
 ben lyke to houndes / For an hounde whan he cometh by
 the roser or by other beautes. thogh he may nat
 pisse / yet wole he heue up his legge and make kon-
 tenaunce to pisse / [859] And for that many man weneth
 that he may nat synne for no lykerousnesse that he doth
 with his wyfe certes that opynyon is fals / god woot a
 man may sleñ hym selfe with his owne knyfe / & make
 hym selfe dronke of his owne tonne / [860] Certis
 be it wyfe or childe. or any wordly thyng that he
 loueth byforn god / it is his mawment. & he is an ydolastre /
 [861] A man sholde louen his wyfe by discrecion /
 patiently and attemprely. and thanne is she as it were

hys syster // [862] The fyfthe fyfthe fynger of the deucls
 hand / is the stynkyng dede of leccchery [863] Certes the .v.
 fyngres of glotonye the fende putte in the wombe of a man.
 & with his .v. fyngers of lecherie he gripeth hym by
 the reynes for to throwe hym into the forneys of
 helle / [864] ther as they shalle han the fuyr and the wormes
 that euer shulle lasten and wepyng & waylyng/
 sharpe hunger & thurste / grymlynnesse of the deucls
 that shullen alle to treden hem withoute respyte. and with
 outen ende // [865] Of lecherie as I seyde sourden
 dyuerse spices. As fornicacion. that is bitwixe man
 & woman that ben nat maryed/ and this is deedly
 and agayns nature / [866] al that is enemy and
 destruccioun to nature. is agayns nature / [867] Parfay the
 reson of a man telleth hym eke wele that it is deedly
 synne / For as myche as [go]d forbade lecherie / And scint
 Poule yeueth hem the regne / *that* [MS. torn] dewe to nowight
 but to hem that doon deedly synne [868] [MS. torn] her synne
 of lecherie of is for to bireue a maiden. of hire may [denh]ode //
 For he that soo dooth: certes he casteth a maiden out
 [MS. torn]e hiest degree that is in this present lyfe [869] &
 bireueth hire thil[ke preci]ous fruyt that the book clepith
 the hundrid fruyt I ne kan [nat seye] it noon other weyes in
 englysshe. but in latyn it hight Cen[tesim]us fructus /
 [870] Certes he that so dooth. is cause of many
 damages [and vile]nyes. moo than any man kan rekene /
 Right as he somtyme is cause of alle the damages that beestes
 don in the felde. that brekyth ¹the hegge or the closure /
 thurgh whiche he destroieth that may nat ben restored /
 [871] For certes no more may maydenhede be re-
 stored thanne an arme that is smyten fro the body may
 retorne a-gayn to wexe / [872] she may haue mercy. this
 woot I wele if shee do penitence / but neuer shal it
 be. that she nas corrupt. [873] And alle be it so that I
 haue spoke somewhat of avoutrie. it is good to shewe moo
 perils that longen to avoutrye for to eschewe that foule

synne / [874] Auowtrye in latyn is for to seyne aprochyng
 of oother mannes bedde thorgh thoo that whilom
 were o fleyssh abawdone hir bodyes to othere persones
 [875] Of this synne as seyth the wise man folwen
 many harmes / First brekyng of feyth And certes in
 feith is the keye of Cristendome / [876] And whan that
 fey[th] is broke & lorne. soothly Cristendome stant
 veyne & with outen fruyt [877] This synne is eke a
 thefte / For thefte generally to speke is for to reue a wight his
 thyng agayns his wille / [878] Certis this is the fouleste
 thefte that may be whan a woman stelyth hire body from
 hire housbande. & yeueth it to hire holour to defoule
 hire. & stelyth hire soule fro criste and yeueth it to
 the deuel / [879] this is a fouler thefte. than for to breke a
 chirche & stele the Chalice // For these avoutiers
 breken te temple of god spirituelly. & stelen the vessel
 of grace that is y^e body & the soule. For whiche criste
 shal destroien hem as seyth saint Poule. [880] Soothly
 of this thefte. douted gretly Ioseph. whan *that* hys lordes
 wyfe preyed hym of vylenye whan he seyde / loo my lady
 how my lorde hath take to me vnder my warde / al that he
 hath in this worlde. ne no thyng of of hise thynges is oute of
 my power but oonly ye that ben his wyfe / [881] And
 how sholde I thanne do *this* wikkednesse & synne so
 horribly agayns god / and agayns my lorde god it forbede /
 Allas alto lyte ys swiche treuth now yfounde // [882] The
 thridde harm is the filthe. thurgh whiche they breken
 the commaundement of god. and defoulen the Auctour of
 hire Matrimony that is criste. [883] For certes in so myche
 as the sacrament of mariage is so noble & so digne so
 myche it is grete synne for to breke yt For god
 makyd mariage in Paradys in the staat of Innocence to
 multiplie mankynde to the seruyce of god [884] and
 therefore is the brekyng the more greuous of whiche
 brekyng comen fals eires ofte tyme that wrongfully
 occupien folkes heritages / And therfore wole [*crist*] put

hem oute of the reigne of heuene that is heritage to good
 [folke] [885] Of thys brekyng comyth eke ofte tyme that
 folk vnware [wed]den or synnen with hire owne. kynrede.
 and namely thilke ha[r]lotes that haunten bordels / of these
 fool wymmen that mowe b[e lykened] to a comyn gonge.
 where as men pourgen hire ordure [886] // w[hat se]y wee
 eke of putours that lyuen by the horrible synne of pute[rie
 [and] constreyne wymmen to yelden hem a certeyne rente
 of hire bo[dely] Puterie / ye somtyme his owne wyfe or
 his childe. as doon [these] bawdes / certes these ben cursed

[¹ leaf 272-3 is out] synnes // [887] vndirstonde eke¹ [²that Advowtre is sette
 [² Addit. MS.
 5140, leaf 348] eke in the .x. commaundementis betwexe thefte and man-
 slauhter / for hit is lyke gretist thefte that may be / ffor hit
 is theft of body and of soule / [888] and hit is like an
 homicide ffor hit kervith a too hem
 that first wer made oo flesshe And therfore by the olde
 lawe of god he sholde be sleyne / [889] But nevir the lesse bi
 the lawe of Ihu Crist that/ is the lawe of pite / whan he
 seide to the woman that was founden in Advowtre
 and sholde haue bene sleyne with stones after the wiþ of the
 Iewes as was her lawe / go quod Ihu Crist and haue no
 more wiþ to do synne or wiþ no more to do synne /
 [890] Sothely the vengiaunce of Advowtre is awarded
 to peynes off helle but yff hit be disturberid
 bi penitence // [891] yet ben ther mo spices of this cursed
 synne / as whan the tone of hem is religious or bothe /
 or of folke that ar enterid in the ordure of subdekyn
 or prest/ or hospitulers / and evir the hiher that
 he is in ordure the grettir is the synne / [892] The
 thynges that gretly grogen her synne is to breken
 her avowe of chastite / whan he hath receyved the ordour /
 [³ leaf 348, back] [893] and ferthere ovir soth it is / that hooly³ ordur is cheeff
 off alle tresoure of god and his speciaH signe and marke
 of chastite to shewe that they be Ioyned to chastite
 which that is most precious liffe that is [894] And
 thes ordred folke bene specially tytelið to god And off the

speeyaH meynye of god / ffor whiche whan thei done deedly
 synne thei bene the speeiaH traitours of^t god and off his
 poeple / ffor the lyven off the poeple and prayen for the poeple /
 and whil thei be suche traitours / her prayours availe
 nat to the poeple / [895] Prestes bene Aungellis as bi
 the dignyte of mysterie / but sothely seynt poule / *Paulus /*
 seith that Sathanas transformyH hym in AungeH of
 liht / [896] Sothely the prest that hauntith deedly
 synne he may be lykened to the AungeH of^t derkenes
 transformed in the AungeH of light / he semyH an AungeH
 of liht / but forsothe he is an aungeH off derkenes /
 [897] Suche prestes bene the sonnes of belial as
 sheweth in the booke of kynges / that thei were the / *In libro Regum*
 sones of^t beliaH. that is the deviH / [898] BeliaH is to seyn
 withouten Iuge and so fare thei that thynken
 thei be fre / and^t haue no Iuge no more than doth a fre
 boH that taketh suche a Cowe as hym lyketh in the
 towne / [899] so fare they by women For riht as a
 fre boH is InouH for alle a toune / riht so is a wicked^t
 preste corrupcioun InowH for aH a parysshe or for alle a
 contreie / [900] Thes prestes as seith the booke ne
comme not to the mysterie of presthode to the poeple ne to god
 ne knowe thei not ne the holde hem not apayed as seith
 the booke of^t suchie flesshe that was to hem offerid / but thei
 take bi force the flesshe that is rawe / [901] Certes so
 thes olde shrewes holde hem not apayed of rostid flesshe
 and sode flesshe / *wit*h whiche the poeple feden hem on
 grete reverence but thei wiH haue rawe flessH of folkes
 wyves and her douhteris [902] And certes thes
 women that consentyn to her harlotry done gret
 wronge to Crist and holy Chirche and alle halows / and
 to alle sowles / ffor thei berevyn hym alle thes that sholde
 worship crist and hooly chirche and pray for cristen
 sowles / [903] And therefore haue¹ suche prestes and her
 lemans eke that consentyn to her lecherye the malison
 off alle cristen courte tille thei come to Amendement //

[904] The .iiij. spice of Advowtre is some tyme betwene a man and his wif / that is whan thei take no rewarde to her assembelynge but onely to her fleshly delite as seith Seynt Ierome [905] and ne reken of no thyng / but that [. *no gap in the MS.*] they ben married alle is good Inough as thynketh to them / [906] but in suche folke hath the deviH power as seith the AungetH Raphael to Tobye / For in her assembelynge that thei put Ihe crist oute of her herte and yeve hem silf to alle ordoure //

[907] The .iiij. spice is of the semble of hem that bene of her kynred or of affinite or els *with* them / *with* whiche her faders or her kyndred haue delid in the synne of lecherye / this synne maketh hem like to houndes that take no kepe to kyndred /

[908] And certes parentail is in .ij. maners eyther gostly or flesly / Gostlye as for to delyn *with* her gosseppis / [909] ffor riht so as he that engenderith a childe is his flesly fader / riht so is god fadir his spirituaH fader / ffor whiche a woman may in no lesse synne assemblyn *with* hir gossep than *with* hir owne fleshly broder //

[910] The .v. spice is thilke abhominable synne of whiche no man vnnetH spekitH ne writeth / nevir the lesse it is openly reherced in holy writte /

[911] this cursidnes doth men & women in dyverse entente or [. *no gap in the MS.*] horrible synne / Certes hooly writte may nat be defouled no more than the sonne that shyneth on the dongehille //

[912] Anothersynne apperteyneth to lechery þat cometh in slepyng / and this synne cometh ofte to hem that bene maydens and eeke to them that bene corrupte and this synne men cleepe pollucion that commeth in .iiij. maners / [913] some tyme off langwisshyng of body / for the humours bene to rank and habundaunt in the bodie of man / some tyme for infirmyte ¹for the febilnes of the vertu retentiff as phisik maketh mencion / some tyme for sorfett of mete and drynke / [914] And some tyme of

/ De parentela

vilons thouthtes that ben enclosed in mannes thouht
whan he goth to slepe whiche may nat ben w^{it}houten
synne / ffor whiche men most kepe hem wiselye or ells
men mowe synne right greuously &c

Remedium contra peccatum Luxurie.

[915]
Nowe commeth the remedie ageyns Lecherye that
is generally Chastite and continence that re-
streyneth alle disorderneyt moevyng that commeth
of flesshly talent/ [916] And evir the grettir merite
shaft he haue that most restreyneth the wicked enchaw-
fyng or ardure of this synne / And this is in .ij.
maners that is to seye chastite of mariage and chastite
of widdowhode / [917] Nowe shallt thou vndirstonde that
matrymonye is leefuht assemblynge of man & of
woman that receyven bi vertu of the sacrement the
bonde / thoruh whiche thei mowe not be departed in alle her
liff / that is to seyne while that thei lyven here both
[918] as seith the booke is fulle grete sacrement /
god made hit in paradise as I haue seide biforne and wolde hym
silt be borne in mariage / [919] [. . . *no gap in the MS.*]
he was at weddyng where as he tornyd watyr in to
wyne / whiche was the first miracle that he wrouht in
erthe bifore his discipules [920] Trewe effecte of
mariage clensth fornicacion & replenisshith holy
chirches of good ffor hit is the ende of mariage
ffor hit chaungith deedly synne in to veniaht synne bitwexte
hem that bene I-weddid and maketh her hertes alle one
that bene I-weddid as weht as the bodyes /
[921] this is verrey mariage that was enstabilisshid by
god or synne biganne / ¹whan natural lawe was in the
right poynte in paradise / & hit was ordeyned that one man
sholde haue but one womane and one woman sholde haue but
one man as seith seynte Austyne / by many reasons /

*Nota quare vna
mulier adheret
vni viro & e
contra*

[922] first for mariage is first figured bitwex crist and

ADDIT. 5140 (for Hengwrt 635) (G-T. 668) [¹ leaf 350]

holy chereche / and the other is for a man is hede of
 a woman / algate bi ordinaunce hit sholde be so /
 [923] ffor yff women had mo men than one
 [. *no gap in the MS.*] and that were an
 horrible thyng bifore god / and eke a woman cowde
 nat plesse to many folke at ones / and also
 ther sholde nevir be pease nor rest amonge hem ffor
 everiche wolde axe his owne thyng / [924] And
 ferther ovir no man sholde knowe his en-
 gendure nor who sholde haue his heritage and the
 woman sholde be the lasse bilevid fro the tyme that
 she were coniuncte to many men //

*Quomodo se
 haberet vir cum
 vxore*

[925] Nowe commeth howe a man sholde bere hym
 to his wiffe in .ij. thynges / that is to
 seye in sufferaunce and reuerence as shewid crist
 whan he made first woman / [926] for he ne made her
 not of the hede Adam for she sholde nat cleyme to
 grete lordship / [927] for ther as the woman hath the
 maistre she maketh to moche defray ther nedith none /
 Ensaamples of this the experience day bi day
 ouht to suffice / [928] Also certes god ne made not
 woman off the foot of Adam ffor she ne shulde not be
 holden to lowe for she can nat paciently suffyr / but god
 made woman of the rybbe of Adam / ffor woman sholde
 be felaw vnto man / [929] man sholde bere hym vnto his
 wiff in feith and in trouthe and in love as seith Seynt
 Poule / that man sholde love his wiff as crist lovith
 hooly chereche / that lovid it so wel that he dyed for hit /
 so sholde a man for his wiff yf hit were nede //

*Quomodo se
 haberet mulier
 erga maritum*

[930] Nowe han a woman sholde be subiecte /
 that tellith Seynt Petyr fyrst in obedi-
 ence [931] as seith the deere / A woman that
 is a wiff / as longe as she is a wiff she hath none
 auctorite to swere nor to bere witnes withoute leve off
 hir housbonde that is hir lorde / Algate she sholde be so
 by reason [932] ¹She sholde eke serve hym in alle

honeste and ben attēpre of hir arraye / I wot wel
 that thei sholde sette her entente to please her hous-
 bondes but nat bi her quayntes of Arraye / [933] Seynt
 Ierome seith that wyfes that bene apparellid in selke
 in precious purpiſh ne mowe nat cloth hem in Ihesu
 Crist Loo what seith Seynt Iohn eeke in this mater
 [934] Seynt Gregory eeke seith that no wifit seekith
 precious arraye but onely for vayne glorie / the more to be
 honoured biforne the poeple [935] hit is a grete
 folye a woman to haue a fayre array outward and in
 her silf foule inwarde // [936] A wiffe sholde eke be
 mesurable in lookyng and beryng and in langage
 and discrete in alle hir wordes and in hir dedes / [937] and
 above alle thynges she sholde love hir housbonde
 with alle hir herte and to hym to be trewe of her bodye /
 [938] so sholde an housbonde eke to his wiff /
 For sith that alle the bodye is the housbondes / so sholde
 hir herte bē / or ellis bituexte hem too as in
 that is no *parfite* mariage / [939] Then shuſt ye vndir-
 stonde that for .iiij. thynges a man and his wiff fleshly
 maye assemble / The first is the entente of engen-
 dure of childerne to the service of god / For certes that is
 the cause fynalle of matrimonye [940] Another cause is to
 yelden eueryche of hem to other the dette of her bodye /
 for neyther of hem hath power of his owne body /
 The .iiij^{de}. is for to eschewe lechere and vilanye /
 the .iiij. is forsoth deedly synne / [941] As to the
 first hit is meritory / the secounde also as seith the
 decre / that she hath meryte of chastite that yeldith to
 her housbonde the dette of hir bodie / ye thouſt hit be
 ayen her lykyng atte the lust of hir hert // [942] The
 .iiij. manere is veniaſt synne and trewly skarsly may
 any of thes be withoute veniaſt synne for the
 corrupcion and the delite // [943] The .iiijth.
 maner is for to vndirstond as is thei that assemblith onely for
 Amorous love / and for none of the ¹foreseide causes / but

for to complysshe thilke brennyng delyte they reke
nevir howe / ofte / sothlye it is dedely synne and yet with
sorwe some folke wot peyne hem more to do then
to the appetite sufficith /

[944] The secounde maner off chastite is to be
a clene widdowe and eschewe the embrasynges of a man¹
[945] These and desiren the embrasyng of Ihesu criste. These
ben thoo that [h]an ben wyues. & han forgoon hir hous-
bondes. and eke women that han doon lecherie & ben
releued by penitence / [946] And certes if that a wife
koude kepen hire aȝ chaste by licence of hire housbonde. so
that shee nere noon occasion that he agilte: it
were to hire a grete merite / [947] These manere
women that obseruen chastitee most be clene in herte.
as wele as in body. & in thought. & mesurable in clothyng.
& in countenance // Abstinēt in etyng and
drynkyng in spekyng & in dede / And thanne is she the
vesseȝ. or the boiste of the blessed Mawdelene. that
fulfilleth holy chirche full of good odour // [948] The .iiij.^e
manere of chastite is virginite. and it behoueth that she
be holy in hert & clene of body / and than is she
spouse to Ihesu criste and she is the lyfe of Aungels /
[949] she is the preisyng of this world/. and she is as
theȝ Martirs in egalite / she hath in hire that tunge may
nat telle / [950] virginite bare oure lorde
criste / & virgyn was hym //

[951] A nother remedie agaynst lecherie is / specially
to withdrawe swiche thyngis as yeuen occasion to thilke
vylenye as ease. etyng & drynkyng. For certes whan
the potte boilleth strongly. the best remedye is to with-
drawe the fuyr [952] Slepynge longe in grete quiete
is eke a grete norise to lecherie //

[953] A nother remedye agayns lecherie. is that a
man or a woman eschew the compaigny of hem of
whiche he douteth to be tempted / For alle be it so. that the
dede be withstonde: yet is there grete temptacion.

[¹ Addit. MS.
5140 ends.]

[² Christchurch
MS., leaf 274.]

[954] Soothly a whyt wal. al thogh it ne brenne nat
fully by stynkyng of a Candle: yet is the walle blakke of the
light [955] full ofte tyme I rede that no man triste in
his owne perfeccion. but he be strenger than Sampson. or
holier than Daud/ or wiser than Salomon //

[956] Now after that I haue declared yow as I kan.
the seuen deedly synnes. & som of hire braunchis &
hire remedies soothly if I coude. I wolde telle yow the
x *commaundementes* [957] But so hye a doctrine I lete to
dyuynes / natheles I hope to god they ben touched in this
tretys. eueryche of hem alle

De confessione

N [958]
Ow for as moche as for the secounde *partye* of peni-
tence stant in confession of mouth. as I began in
the second chapitre I sey seint Augustyn seith /
[959] synne is euery word/ & euery dede / And alle that
men coueiten agayn the law of Ihesu criste / & this is
for to synne in herte / in mowth / & in dede / by *thi* v.
wittys / that ben sight. huryng. smellynge tastynge.
or sauorynge and felynge // [960] Now is it good to
vndirstonde the circumstaunces that aggreggen muchel euery
synne // [961] Thow shalte considere. what thow art that doist
synne. whether thow be male or female. yonge or/
olde gentell/ or thralle. free / or seruauunt. hole / or syke /
wedded/ or sengle / ordred or vnordred. wis or fool.
clerke / or seculer / [962] if she be of thy ¹kynrede bodely
or gostely / or noon / if any of thy kynrede haue synne[d]
with hire or noon //

[963] Another circumstance is this / whether it be
[done] in fornicacioun. or in avoutrie. or Incest or
noon / Mayden or noon. in manere of homycyde or noon.
orrible grete synnes. or smale. and how longe thow haste
contynued in synne // [964] The thridde circumstance / is
the place / where thow haste doon synne / whether in other

mennes hous / or in thyn owne. in felde or in chirche.
 or in chirche hawe / in chirche dedicat or noon /
 [965] For if the chirche be haledwed. and man or woman
 spilde his kynde inwith that place by wey of synn[e] or by
 wikked temptacion: the chirche is entredited. til it
 be reconciled by the bysshope / [966] and the
 preest sholde be entredited that dideswichea vilenye to terme
 of alle his lyfe he sholde nomore synge masse / & if he dide: he
 sholde doon deedly synne. at euery tyme that he songe masse //
 [967] The ferthe circumstaunce is be whiche mediat-
 ours. as by messengeris. or for enticement. or for
 consentement to bere compaignye [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] wole goo the
 deuyl of helle [968] for they that egge[n] or con-
 senten to the synne: ben prisoners to the synne. &
 of the damnacion of the synnere //

[969] The fyfthe is how many tymes
 that he ha[th] synned if it be in his mynde. & how ofte
 that he hath falle. [970] For he that ofte falle; in synne:
 he despised the mercy of god. & encreseth his synne
 & is vnkynde to criste / & he wexeth the more febl[e]
 to withstonde synne. & synneth the more lightly.
 [971] & the latter aryseth. & is the more eschewe for
 to schryue hym. and namely to hym that hath ben his con-
 fessour / [972] For whiche that folke whan that they fallen
 agayn in hire olde folyes. other they leten hire olde confessours
 al outrely. or they departen hire shryfte in dyuers
 places / but soothly swiche departed shrifte deserueth no
 mercy of god of his synnes // [973] The sixte circum-
 staunce is. why that a man synneth. a[s] by whiche tempta-
 cion. & if hym selfe procure thilke temptacioun or by the ex-
 citynge of other folke / or if he synne with a woman [b]y
 force / or by hire owne assente. [974] or if the woman
 maugre hire hed[e] hath be aforced or noon this
 shalle she telle / for couetise / or for pouerte / &
 if it was hire procurynge or noon / & swiche maner

harneys // [975] The seuenthe circumstance is in what
 maner he h[ath] doon his synne / & how that she hath
 suffred that folke han [doon] to hire / [976] The same shalle
 the mantellen pleyly with alle[cir]cumstaunces. & whether
 he hath synned with comoun borde[1] women or noon /
 [977] or doon his synne in holy tymes or noon /
 or by forn his shrifte / or after his lattere
 shryfte / [978] & hath parauenture broken therfore his
 penaunce enyoined / by whoos helpe & whoos counseile. bi
 sorcerie or crafte al moste be tolde / [979] Alle these
 thynges after that they ben grete or smale. engreggen the
 conscience of man. & eke the preest. that is
 thy Iuge may the better ben auyseyd of hise Iugement. in
 yeuyng of thy penaunce. and ¹[t]hat is after thy contricioun /
 [980] For vnderstonde wele that after tyme that a man
 hath defouled his bapteme by synne. if he wole come to
 sauacioun. ther is noon other wey. but be penitence and
 shrifte & be satisfaccioun / [981] & namely by the twoo //
 If ther be a confessour to whiche he may shryue hym /
 And the Thridde if he haue lyfe to performe it /

[982] Thanne shalle men loke & considere if he
 wole make a trewe & profitable confessioun: ther
 moste ben iiij. condiciouns // [983] Firste it mote ben in
 sorwefull bitterness of herte / As seide te kynge Ezechiel to
 god / I wole remembre me alle the yeres of my lyfe in
 bitterness of myn herte / [984] This condicion of bitter-
 nesse hath .v. signes // The firste is that confession
 moste be shamefaste nat for to kouere ne hide his synne /
 but for he hath agilty his god & defouled his soule /
 [985] And here of seith seint Augustyn / The herte
 trauaileth for shame of his synne / And for he hath grete
 shame-fastnesse / he is digne to haue grete mercy of god /
 [986] Swiche was y^e confessioun of the publican. that
 wolde nat heue vp his eyen to heuen. For he hadde
 offended god of heuen / For whiche shamefastnesse: he
 had a noon the mercy of god / [987] And therfore seyth

seint Augustyn that swiche shamefaste folke ben nexte
 foryefnesse & remission // [988] Another signe is
 humylite of Confession / Of which seith seint Petir:
 humbleth yow vnder the myght of god / the hond of god
 is myghty in confession: For therby god foryeueth the
 synnes For he allone hath the power / [989] And this
 humylite shaH ben in hert & in signe outwarde / For
 right as he hath humylite to god in hert: right so
 sholde he humble his body outwarde to the preest thatte sitte
 in goddis place / [990] For whiche in no maner sith that
 criste ys souereyn & the preest mene & mediatour bi-
 twixe criste & the synnere / & the synner is the laste
 by wey of reson / [991] thanne sholde nat the synner sitte
 as hye as his confessours. but knele byforn hym. or at
 his feet. but if maladye disturbed it / For he shalle nat take
 kepe who sitte there. but in whoos place that he sitteth //
 [992] A man that hath trespassed to a lorde / & cometh for to
 axe mercy & maken his acorde & sette hym down
 by the lorde: men wolde holden hym outrageous & nat
 worthy so sone for to haue remission ne mercy [993] The
 thridde signe is. that thy shrifte sholde be full of teeris. if
 men may. & if he may nat wepe with his bodely eyen:
 late hym wepe in his herte / [994] swiche was the confession
 of seint Petir / For after that he hadde forsake ihesu criste:
 he wente oute & weepe bitterly [995] The fertho
 signe is / that he ne lette nat for his shame to shewe
 his confession / [996] Swiche was the confession of the
 Mawdeleyne that ne spared for no shame of hem that weren
 atte feste for to goo to oure lorde ihesu criste & byknowe
 to hym hir synne // [997] The fifte signe is that a man
 or woman be obeissaunt to receyue the penaunce that
 hym is enyoyned / For certes Ihesu criste for
 the giltes of o man ¹was obedient to his deeth /

[998] The seconde condicion of verrey confession
 is that it be hastely don / For certes if a man hadde a
 dedly wounde. euer the lenger that he tarieth to warisse

hym selfe the more wolde it corrupte & haste hym to
 his deeth / and eke y^e wounde woude be the werse for to
 hele / [999] And right so farith synne. that longe
 tyme is in a man vnshewid / [1000] Certe a man ough[t]
 hastely shewyn his synnes For many causes. as for drede
 of deth that ofte sodeynly. And in no certeyne what
 tyme it shal be ne in what place / & eke the drecchyng
 of o synne draweth in a noth[er] [1001] And eke the lenger
 he tarieth: the forther he is fro criste. And if he abide
 vnto his laste day: scarsly may he shryue hym or re-
 membre hym of his synnes. or repente for the
 greuous malad[ye] of his deeth. [1002] And for as myche as
 he hath nat in his lyfe herkened Ihesu criste [.
 *no gap in the MS.*] at his laste
 day & scarsly wole he herkene hym [1003] And
 vndirstonde that this condicion moste haue .iiij. thynges //
 // Thy shrifte moste be purueyd by-forn and auysed /
 For wikked haste dooth noo profite. And that a man konne
 shryue hym of his synnes. be it of pride or enuye. &
 so forth. with the spices & circumstaunces / [1004] and that
 he haue comprehended in his mynde the nombre & the
 grettenes of his synnes and how longe that he hath leyn
 in synne [1005] & eke that he be contryte of hise synnes
 and in stedefaste purpos by the grace of god neuer eft to
 falle in synne // And eke that he drede. & countrewaite
 hym selfe & that he flee the occasions of synne to whiche he
 is enclyned // [1006] Also that thow shalte shryue the of alle
 thy synnes to oo man // And nat a parce[l] to oo man. &
 nat a parcel to a nother. that is to vndirstonde in intent
 to departe thy confessioun as for shame or drede / For it
 nys butte stranglyng of thy soule / [1007] For certis Ihesu
 criste is intierly al good & in hym is noon imperfeccion / And
 therefore outhur he foryeueth alle parfitly. or elles neuer a
 dele. [1008] I sey nat that if thow be assigned to the
 penitauncer for certeyn synne / that thow arte bounde too
 shewe hym alle the remenaunt of thy synnes of whiche

thow haste be shreuen of thy curate / but if it lyke the
 of thyn humylite this is noo departynge of thy shrifte.
 [1009] Ne I ne sey nat *theras* I speke of dyuysiou of confes-
 sion. that if thow haue licence for to shryue the to a discreet
 & an honest preest where thee lyketh / & eke by the licence
 of thy curat that thow ne maiste wele shryue the to hym
 of alle thy synnes / [1010] but late noo blot byhynde /
 ne late noo synne vntoolde. Asfer as thow hastee remem-
 braunce / [1011] And whan thow shalte be shryue to thy
 curat. telle hym alle thy synne that thow haste doon /
 sith thowe were laste y-shryuen / Al this is no wikked intente
 of dyuysion of shrifte //

[1012] Also the verrey shrifte axeth certeyne con-
 dicions ¹[F]yrste that thow shryue the by thy free wille
 nat constrayned. ne for shame of folke. ne for maladic
 or swiche thynges / For it is reson that he that trespaseth
 by his free wille: he mote be his free wille confesse his
 trespase / [1013] Noon other man shalle tellen his synne
 but he hym selfe / Ne he shal nat naite or denye his synne.
 ne wrath hym agayn the preest for hise amonestynge
 to lete synne // [1014] The secound condicion is / that thy
 shryfte be laweful. that is to seyn that thow that shryuest
 the & eke the preste that hureth thy confession be
 verrely in the feith of holy chirche [1015] And that a
 man ne be nat despeired of the mereye of Ihesu criste as
 kaym or Iudas / [1016] And eke a man mote accuse
 hym selfe of his owne trespase / & nat a nother / but he
 shalle blame .and. wite hym selfe & his owne malice of his
 synne & noon other / [1017] But natheles but if
 a nother man be occasion or enticere of his synne or that the
 estate of a persone be swiche. thurgh whiche his synne is
 agreggyd/ or ellys that he may nat pleynly shryue hym
 hym but he telle the persone with whiche he hath synned:
 than may he telle it. [1018] so that his entente be nat
 to bakbite the .persone. but oonly to declaren his con-
 fession /

[1019] Thow ne shalte natte eke make no lesynges in thy confessioun for humylite / parauenture to seyn that thow haste doon synnes. of whiche thow were neuer gilty // [1020] For seint Augustyn seith. yf thow be cause of humylite makest lesynges on thy selfe thogh that thow ne were nat in synne byforn: yet arte thow thanne in synne thurgh thy lesynges // [1021] Thow moste eke shewe thy synnes by thyn owne propre Mouth / but if thow be woxen dombe. & nat be no lettre // for thow haste doon the synne: thow shalte haue the shame // [1022] [T]how shalte nat eke peynte thy confession by faire subtile wordes [to] kouere the moore thy synne / For thanne bygyleste thow thy selfe [a]nd nat the preest / Thow most telle it platly. be it neuer so foule ne so horrible // [1023] Thow shalte eke shryue the to a preest / that is discrete to counseile the // And eke thow shalt nat shryue thee for veyn glorie. ne for ypocrisie. ne for no cause. but only for the doute of Ihesu criste & the hele of thy soule // [1024] Thow shalt nat eke renne to the preest sodeynly to telle hym lightly thy synne. as who so telleth a Iape / or a tale / but auyselfy & with grete deuocion / [1025] and generally shryue the ofte. if thow ofte falle: ofte thow aryse be confession / [1026] And though thow shryue the ofter thanne ones of synne of whiche thow haste be shryuen. it is the more meryte / And as seith seint Augustyn. thow shalt haue the more lightly relesyng & grace of god bothe of synne & of payne / [1027] And certes oones in a yere atte leste weye it is lawefull / for to ben housled / for soothly onys a yere. alle thynges renouellen.

[1028] Now haue I tolde of verrey con[fes]sion that is the seconde partie of penitence

¹De tercia parte penitencie

T^[1029] he thridd[e] partie of penitence is Satisfiacion. And that stant generally in almesse. & bodely peyne // [1030] Now ben there .iiij. maner of Almesses. Contricion of herte. where a man offreth hym selfe to god /. Another is to haue pite of his neighbores / The thridd[e] is in yeuyng[e] good counseile & comfort goostly & bodyly where men han nede. and namely in sustenance of mannes foode // [1031] And take kep[e] a man hath nede of these thynges. generally he hath nede of fode // h[e] hath nede of clothynge & herberwe / he hath nede of charitable counseile & visytyng[e] in prison. & Maladie. & sepulture of his dede body / [1032] And if thow maist nat visite the needfult with thy personce visite hym by thy message and thy yeftes / [1033] These ben general almesses or werkys of charite of hem that han temporel rechesse or discrecion in conseillyng[e] / Of these werkes shaltow heren at the day of dome //

[1034] These Almesses shaltow doon of thynne owne propre thynges & hastyfly and priuely if thow maiste / [1035] But natheles if thou maist nat do pryuely: thow shalt nat forbere to doon thyn almesse. though men se it. so that it be nat doon for thanke of y^e worlde but oonly for thanke of Ihesu criste. [1036] For as witnesseth sei[nt] Mathew .5^{to}. A cite may nat ben hydde that is sette on a Mountayne ne men lyght nat a lanterne. & putte it vnder a busshel. but men. se[t] it on a Candel-styke to lyghten the men in the hous // [1037] Ryght soo shal youre lyght lighten byforn men. that they may sen youre good werkys & glorifien youre fader that is in heuene //

[1038] Now as to speke of bodyly peyne it stante in praiseris in wakynges in fastynges & in v[er]tuouse

techynges of orisons // [1039] ye shulle vndirstonde
 that orison[s] or preiers is for to seyn. a pitous wille of
 herte that redresse [*MS. torn*] god & expressith it by worde
 outwarde to remoeue harmes. & t[o] han thynges
 espirituel & durable. and somtyme temporel thynges /
 [of] whiche orisons. certes in the orison of the Pater noster.
 hath Ihesu criste enclosed moost thynges // [1040] Certes
 it is priuelegged of .iiij. thynges in his dignite / for whiche
 it is more digne / thanne any other praier for Ihesu
 criste hym selfe maketh it / [1041] And it is short For it sholde
 be koude the more lightly / And forto witholde it the
 more esely in herte / & helpen hym selfe the oftene with
 the orison / [1042] & for a man sholde be the lasse wery
 to sey it / And for a man may nat excuse hym to lerne
 it. it is so shorte. & so esy / And for it comprehendeth in it
 self[f] alle gode preiers / [1043] The exposicion of this
 holy praier / that is so excellent & digne I be-take to
 the maistris of theologie. saues thus moch wole I seyn.
 that whan thou praieest that god sholde foryeue th[e] thy
 giltes. as thou foryeuest hem that agiltyen to the: be full
 wele ware. that thou ne be nat oute of charite / [1044] This
 holy oriso[n]¹ [²amenysshith eke venia[n] synnes and therefore
 hit apperteyneth specially to penitence /

[¹ Christchurch
 MS. has lost 10
 leaves.]

[² Addit. MS.
 5140, fol. 355,
 back]

[1045] this prayer most be trewly seide and in
 verrey feyth / and that men prayen to god ordinaty and dis-
 cretely and devoutly And a[n] wey a man sha[n] put his wille
 to be subiecte to p^e wil[l] of god / [1046] this orisone
 most eke be seide with gret humblenes and full pure /
 honestly and not to the anoyauce of any man or woman
 hit most eke be contynued with the workes of charite /
 [1047] hit awayleth eke ageyne the vices of the soule / For as
 seyth Seynt Ierome / bi fastynge bene sauid the vices of the
 flesshe / and by prayer the vices of the soule //

[1048] Aftyr this thou shalt vnderstonde that
 bodely payne stonndith in wakyng for Ihesu Crist seith /
 waketh and prayeth þat ye ne enter in wicked

temptacioun / [1049] ye shal vndirstonde that fastyng stondith also in iij thynges / in forberyng of bodely metes & drynkes and in forberyng of worldelye iolite / and in forberinge of dedely synne [.]
 . . . no gap in the MS.] with his mygh /

[1050] And thou shalt vndirstonde that god ordeyned fastyng / and to fastyng apparteyneth .iiij. thynges / [1051] largenes to pore folke / gladnes of herte / spirituall not to Anggrie / ne anoyed ne gruche for he fastith / and alle for semblable houre for to ete by mesure / that is for to seye A man sholde nat ete in vntyme ne sitte no lenger at his table to ete for he fasteth //

[1052] Then thou shalt vnderstand that bodely peyne stonde in disciplyne or techyng bi worde or bi wrytyng or bi ensauple / Also in werynge of heyres or of stamyn or of habergions on her naked flesshe for cristes sake And suche maner of penaunces / [1053] but ware the wel that suche maner of penaunces on thy flesshe ne make not thyn herte bittyr or ¹Angre or noyed of thy silf / for bettir is to cast away thyn heire than for to cast the swetnes of ihesu crist [1054] And therfore seith Seynt Poule / cloth you as they that bene chosyn of god in herte of misericorde debonarite sufferaunce / and suche maner of clothyng of whiche Ihesus Crist is most apayed than of his here or of his habourgioun or hawberkes //

[1055] then is disciplyne eke in knockyng of thy brest in scourginge with yerdes / in knelynges / in tribulaciouns / [1056] in suffering paciently wronges that benedone to hym / and eke in pacient sufferaunce of maladye / or lesyng of worldely Cateh / or of wif or children / or other freendes /

[1057] Then shalt thou vndirstonde whiche thynges distourbyn penaunce / and this is in .iiij. maners that is drede shame hope and wanhope that is desperacioun / [1058] & for to speke first of drede for whiche he

wenith that he may suffre no penaunce / [1059] There ageyns is remedie / for to thynke þat bodye penaunce is but shorte and litel at regarde of þe peyne of helle / that is crueh and so longe that it lastith withoute eende /

[1060] Nowe ageyns the shame that a man hath to shryve hym and namely thes ypocrytes that wolde beholde so parfite that they haue no nede to shryve hem / [1061] ageyns that shame sholde a man thynke that by waye of reasoun that he that hath nat bene shamed to do foule thynges Certes hym ouht nat to be ashamed to do fayre thynges / and that is confessions // [1062] A man sholde eeke thynk that god seeth and wot alle thy thouhtes and alle thy workes / Fro hym may no thyng be hide ne coverid / [1063] Men sholde eke remembre hem of the shame that is to come atte the daye of dome to hem that be nat penitent and shryven in this present lyff / [1064] For aH the creaturs in erthe and in helle shuH seene appertely alle that he hydeth in this worlde /

[1065] Now for to speke of the hope of hem þat bene negligent and slowe to shryve hem / hit stont in .ij. maners / [1066] the tone is þat he hopith for to lyve longe / and for to porchace ¹moche riches for his delyte / and then he wolde shryve hym & as he seith he may as hym semyth than tyme Inouh for to come to shrifte / [1067] Another is surquedre that he hath in cristis mercye [1068] Ageyne the fyrst vice / he shaH thynke that our lyff is in no sekynes / and eke that alle the riches in this worlde ben in aventure and passen as a shaddowe in the walle [1069] as seith Seynte Gregorie that hit perteynith to the grete rihtwousnes of god / that nevir shaH the peyne stynte of hem that nevir wolde withdrawe hem from synne and rancour but aye contynue in synne / For thilke perpetual wille to done synne they shuH haue perpetuaH peyne //

[1070] Wanhope is in .ij. maners / the fyrst wanhope is in the mercie of Crist / that othir is that they

thynke that they ne myght not longe *preserve* in goodnes / [1071] The fyrst wanhope *commeth* of that he demyth that he hath synned so gretely / and so ofte / and so longe lyen in synne *pat* he shall not be savid / [1072] Certes ageyns this cursid wanhope sholde he thynke that the passioun of our lorde Ihesu Crist is more stronge for to vnbynde than synne is stronge / [no gap in MS.] [1073] Ageyns þe secounde wanhope he shaH thynke that as ofte as he fallith he may arrise ageyne by penitence / and thouh he nevir so longe haue leyne in synne / the mercie of god is allwey redye to receyve hym to mercie / [1074] Ageyns that wanhope that he demeth that he sholde not longe *persevere* in goodnes / he shaH thynke the febylnes of the deviH may no thyng done but men woH suffyr hym [1075] & eke he shaH haue strength of the help of god and of alle holy chirche and of the *proteccioun* of alle aungells yff hym lyst //

[1076] Then shuH men vndirstonde what is the rewarde of penaunce and aftir the worde off Ihesu Criste hit is the endeles blysse of hevyne [1077] ther ioye hath no contrarie of no wo ne grevance / there alle harmes bene passid of this present lyff / there as is sykernes frome the peyne off helle / there as the blissidfuH companye that ¹reioysen evirmore eueryche of others ioye / [1078] there as the bodye of a man that whilom was foule and dyrke is more clerer than the sonne / there as the bodye was whilom seke frel febyH and mortaH / is inmortaH and so stronge and so hole that there may no thyng apayre hit / [1079] ther as is neithyr hungryr nor thurst ne colde / but euery soule replenysshid *with* the sight of the parfite knowynge of god / [1080] This blessid regne mowe men purchace by poverté espirituaH and the glorie bi lowlynnes / The plente of ioye by hungryr and thurst / and the reste by traveH / and the lyff by dethe and mortificacioun off synne Amen ./

Hic capit Autor licenciam ./

[1081]

Nowe I praye to them alle that herken this litel tretys
 or redyn that yff ther be any thyng in hit þat lyketh
 hem / that therof thei thankeñ oure lord ihesu
 crist of whom proceedith alle witte and alle goodnes /
 [1082] And yf ther be any thyng that displeth them / I
 praye them also erecte it to the diffaute off myn
 vnkonnyng / and nat to my wiþ / that wolde feyne haue
 done bettir yif I hadde had konnyng [1083] For oure
 booke seith Alle that is wryten / is witen for oure
 doctryne and that is myn entent / [1084] Wherefore I
 beseche you mekely for the mercye of god that ye pray for
 me / that crist haue mercie on me and forgyff me my
 giltes [1085] and namely of myn translaciouns and of myn
 endityng of worldely vanytes the whiche I revoke in my de-
 tracciouns / [1086] As the booke off Troilys / The booke
 also of Fume / The booke of .xxv. ladies / The
 booke of the Duchesse / The booke of Seynt Valentynes
 day / And the parlement of byrdes / The Talys of Caunter-
 bury ¹thilke that soun den vnto synne / [1087] The booke
 of the leon / And many anothir booke yff they were in my
 remembraunce And many a songe / And many a lechourous
 lay / Crist for his grete mercie foryeve me the synne //
 [1088] But off the translacioun off Boes consolacioun
 And othir bookes of legendis and off Seyntes / And of Omelies /
 And moralite / And deuocioun / [1089] that thanke I oure
 lord Ihesu Crist and his blysfuþ moder / and alle the
 Seyntis in hevyn / [1090] beseekyng them / that thei from
 hens forth vnto my lyves eende / sende me grace off
 [.]

. no gap in the MS.] verray penaunce Con-

fessioun and Satisfaccioun / to done in this present lyff /
 [1091] thoruh the benygne grace of hym that is kyng of
 kynges / and preste off alle preestis / that bouht vs
 with the precious bloode off his herte / [1092] For that I mot
 bene oone of hem att the laste daye off domethat shaH besavid
 Qui cum deo patre & spiritu sancto viuis & regnas deus
 Per omnia secula Amen

Explicit narracio Rectoris et ultima inter nar-
 rationes huius libri de quibus composuit
 Chaucer ./ cuius Anime propicietur deus / AMEN .

[*Follows, in Brit. Mus. Addit. 5140, Lydgate's Siege of
 Thebes, incomplete:*

Incipit ultima de fabulis Cantuarie translata
 et prolata per Dompnum Iohannem Lidgate
 monachum in redeundo a Cantuaria . Incipit pro-
 logus. /]



THE

Gengwert MS

(No. 154)

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.



PART VI.

Appendix 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE CHAUCER SOCIETY BY
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MDCCCLXXXI.

The Chaucer Society.

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Hon. Sec.:—W. A. DALZIEL, Esq., 67, Victoria Road, Finsbury Park, N.

THE CHAUCER SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS.

To do honour to CHAUCER, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differed from the printed texts, this Society was founded in 1868. There were then, and are still, many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts were and are wanted; and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder (Mr Furnivall) began with *The Canterbury Tales*, and has given of them (in parallel columns in Royal 4to) six of the best theretofore unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch as the parallel arrangement necessitated the alteration of the places of certain tales in some of the MSS, a print of each MS has been issued separately, following the order of its original. The first six MSS printed have been: the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere); the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq.); the Camb. Univ. Libr., MS. Gr. 4. 27; the Corpus, Oxford; the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield); and the Lansdowne 851 (Brit. Mus.). The Harleian 3374 will follow.

Of Chaucer's *Minor Poems*,—the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the *Canterbury Tales*,—all the available MSS have been printed so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

The *Boece* from the best MS, and the *Troilus* Parallel-Text from the 3 best MSS, are now all in type.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Mr F. J. Furnivall has read and will read all with their MSS.

Autotypes of all the best Chaucer MSS, either have been or will be published.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works; and the Second, such originals of and essays on these as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Tales.

FIRST SERIES.

The Society's issue for 1868, in the First Series, is,

- I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the *Canterbury Tales*, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables, showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 38 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Moveable Prologues" of the *Canterbury Tales*,—The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue, when moved from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)

II. The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS.

III.	"	"	"	"	"	Hengwrt	"	154
IV.	"	"	"	"	"	Cambridge	"	Gr. 4. 27
V.	"	"	"	"	"	Corpus	"	Oxford
VI.	"	"	"	"	"	Petworth	"	
VII.	"	"	"	"	"	Lansdowne	"	851

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for 1869, in the First Series, is,

VIII. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales: Ellesmere MS.

IX.	"	"	"	"	"	Hengwrt	"	} with an Appendix of "Gamelyn" from six MSS.
X.	"	"	"	"	"	Cambridge	"	
XI.	"	"	"	"	"	Corpus	"	
XII.	"	"	"	"	"	Petworth	"	
XIII.	"	"	"	"	"	Lansdowne	"	

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

The issue for 1870, in the First Series, is,

XIV. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, with an Appendix of the Spurious Tale of Gamelyn, in 6 parallel Texts. (Six-Text, Part II.)


The issue for 1871, in the First Series, is,

- XV. The Man of Law's, Shipman's, and Prioress's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Thopas, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, and 10 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS.
- XVI. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS.
- XVII. " " " " " " " Cambridge MS.
- XVIII. " " " " " " " Corpus MS.
- XIX. The Shipman's, Prioress's, and Man of Law's Tales, from the Petworth MS.
- XX. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Lansdowne MS.

each with woodcuts of fourteen drawings of Tellers of Tales in the Ellesmere MS.

HENGWRT APPENDIX

OF PIECES AND CUTS NOT IN THE HENGWRT MS.

- | | PAGE |
|--|---------|
| 1. Appendix to Group A: the spurious <i>Tale of Gamelyn</i> , from Harleian MS. 1758 (the first 13 lines from MS. Reg. 17 D xv, in the British Museum) | 1*-26* |
| [ The reader is asked to put a * to the nrs. of the pages.] | |
| 2. The genuine <i>Nun's-Priest's End-Link</i> , Group B, § 15, p. 301 Six-Text, from Addit. MS. 5140, Brit. Mus. It would have followed p. 244 above, had this <i>Link</i> been in the Hengwrt MS. ¹ | 27* |
| 3. The genuine <i>Man-of-Law-Shipman Link</i> ¹ (tho' call'd <i>Squire's Prologue</i>), Group B, § 3, p. 167 Six-Text, from the Royal MS. 18 C ii, Brit. Mus. It would have followed p. 294 above, had it been in the Hengwrt MS. | 28* |
| 4. The genuine <i>Clerk-Merchant Link</i> , ¹ Group E, § 3, p. 442 Six-Text, from Shirley's Harleian MS. 7333 (Brit. Mus.). It would have been substituted for the <i>Clerk's End-Link</i> on p. 439 above, had it been in the Hengwrt MS. | 29* |
| 5. The genuine | |
| G. § 2. <i>Second-Nun—Canon's-Yeoman Link</i> . | |
| G. § 3. <i>Canon-Yeoman's Preamble</i> . | |
| G. § 4. <i>Canon-Yeoman's Tale</i> . | |
| p. 547-574 Six-Text, from the Lichfield Cathedral MS. They'd have followed p. 397 above, had they been in the Hengwrt MS. | 30*-57* |

¹ The best A-type MSS. reject this *Link*.

6. Drawings of the 23 *Tellers of the 24 Canterbury Tales*, copied from the Ellesmere MS., and cut on wood by Mr Hooper.
7. Drawings of 6 *Tellers of 6 Canterbury Tales*—the Reeve, Cook, Monk, Pardoner, Wife of Bath, and Manciple—and 6 *allegorical Figures*—Wrath and Mercy, Gluttony and Abstinence, Lechery and Chastity,—from the Cambridge University MS., Gg. 4. 27, cut by Mr Hooper.

2.

THE NUN'S PRIEST'S END-LINK.

[*Addit. MS 5140, Brit. Mus., leaf 282, back (paper).*]

[Incipit prologus fabule secunde monialis]

SIr Nvnny's preest / our' host seide anoon
 I-blessid be thi breche / and every stoon
 This was · a mery tale / of Chan'tecleer'
 But bi my trouth / yiff thou were seculer' 4640
 Thou woldist ben / a trede foule a riht
 ffor yff thou coragge / as thou hast myht
 The were neede / of hennys as I weene
 ya. mo than vij tymes / seventene 4644
 See such'e brawne / hath this gentil preest
 So grete a neck / and such' a large breest
 He lookith as a sparhawk / with his eyen
 Hym needith nat / his colour' for to dyen 4648
 With brasih ne with greyn / off portyngal
 Now sire fair falle you / for your' tale
 And aftir that / he with full mery cheer' 4651
 Seid vnto the Nunne / as ye may heer' [*Addit. MS extract stops*]

[*Group H (the Manciple) follows in the MS.*]

3.

THE MAN-OF-LAW—SHIPMAN LINK.

*Royal MS 18 C ii, leaf 82 (Brit. Mus.).***The prolog of the squyers tale**

O Wre oost vp on his stiropes stood a-non
 And saide godemen herkeneth euerichon
 This was a thrifty tale for þe nones
 Sire parisshe preest *quod* he for goddes bones 1166
 Telle vs a tale as was thi forward yore
 I se wel that ye lernede men in lore
 Can moche good by goddes dignete
 The person him Answered benedicite 1170
 What eyleth the man so synfully to swere
 Owre ooste answerd O Ianekyn be ye there
 I smelle a lollere in the wynde *quod* he
 How goodmen *quod* owre oost' herkeneth me 1174
 A-bideth for goddes digne passioun
 ffor we shal haue a *predicacioun*
 This lollere here wil *prechen* vs som what
 Nay by my fader sowle that shal he nat 1178
 Seide þe squier here shal he nat preche
 He shal no gospel glosen here no teche
 He leueþ alle in the grete god he
 He wolde sowen som difficulte 1182
 Or springen Cokkel in owre clene corn
 And ther-fore hoost' y warne þe byforn
 Mi Ioly body shal a tale telle
 And I shal klynken yow so mery A belle 1186
 That I shal waken al this compaignye
 But' it' shal not ben of philosophie
 Ne phislyas ne termes queynte of lawe
 Ther is but litel latyn in my mawe 1190

Here endyth the the prolog //

4.

[*Harl. MS 7333, on leaf 68, back, col. 2.*]

[And here beginnithe þe Marchaundis tale]

WEping & wayling Care and ðpere sorowe
I know Inow bothe evin & Eke on morowe
Quod the marchaunt & so dothe ðpere moo
That weddide be I trowe that it be soo 1216
ffor wel wote I it ffarithe so be me
I have a wyf quod he the worst that may be
ffor thowhe the fende Covpelið to hir were
She wolde him ouer-mache I dare wel swere 1220
What shude yewe reherce in special
her hiȝe malice she is a shrew at Alle
Ther is A longe & A large difference /
Be-twyxt gresildes gret paciens 1224
And of my wyfe the passyng Crueltee
Were I vnbounde Also mut I thee
I wolde neuer Efte Come in that snare
We weddið men leve in sorow & Care 1228
A-say who-so wolle And he shaH fynde
That I sey sothe by seint Thomas of ynde
As for the more part I sey not Al
God shilde it that it so shulde be-falle 1232
O goode sir hoste I have I-weddið be
Thes monthes too And no more parde
And yit I trowe he hathe Alle his lyf
Wyfles be thow that men wolde him Rue 1236
Into the hert ne Coude in no manere where
Tellyn so muche sorow as I nowe here
Coude telle of my wyfes Cursid-nesse/
Nowe quod owre Ost marchande so godt yowe blesse 1240
Synne ye so mekyH Con of that Arte
fful hertly I pray yowe telle vs parte /
Gladly quod he but of myn owne sore
ffor sory herte I tell[e] may nomore] [*Harl. 7333 extract ends*]

5.

[*Lichfield MS, leaf 172, l. 3.*]

[and now

begynneth the prologe of the Chanons yoman .

Whan ended was / the tale of^t seint Cecyle
 Er we fully / had riden fif^t myle
 At Boughton. vnder the blee / vs gan a take
 A man that clothed was / in clothes blake 557
 And vnder *pat* / he had a whit^t surplys
 His hakeney that^t was / al pomel grys
 So swette / that^t it wonder was to see
 Hit^t semed he had / priked myles three 561
 The hors eke / that^t his yoman rood vpon
 So swette / *pat* vnnethe miȝte he goon
 Aboute the peytrel / stood the foom ful hiȝe
 He was of fome / al flekked as a pye 565
 A male twifold / vpon his croper lay
 It semed *pat* he caried / litel aray
 Al light^t for somer / rood *þis* worthy man
 And^t in myn herte / wondren I bigan 569
 what^t *pat* he was / til *pat* I vnderstood
 How *pat* his cloke / was swed to his hood
 ffor which whan I longe / had a-vised me
 I demed him / som chanoñ for to be 573
 his hat heeng^t at his bak^t / down by laas
 ffor he had riden / more than trot^t or paas
 He had ay priked / lyk as he were wood
 A clote leef / he had vnder his hood 577
 ffor swoot^t / and for to kepe his hede fro hete
 But it^t was ioye / for to seen him swete
 His forhed dropped / as a stillatorie
 were ful of plannteyñ / and of peritorie 581

And whan þat he com / he gan to crie 582
 God saue quod he / this ioly companie
 ffaste haue I priked / quod he for þoure sake
 Be cause þat I wolde / þow ouertake 585
 To ryden / in þis mery companie
 His yoman eke / was ful of curtesie
 And sire now // in the morwe tyde
 Out of þoure Hostery / I saugh þow ryde [*leaf 172, back*] 589
 And warned here / my lord and my souerayn
 which þat to ride / with þow is ful fayn
 ffor his disport / he loueth daliaunce
 And for þi warnyng / god ȝeue þe good chaunce 593
 Saide oure hoost / certes it wolde seme
 Thy lord were wys . and so I may wel deme
 He is ful iocunde / also dar I leye
 Can he ought telle / a mery tale or tweye 597
 with whiche / he glade . may þis companye
 who sire my lord / ȝe ȝe withoute lye
 He can of merthe / and eek of iolyte
 Nouȝt but ynogh / also sire trusteth me 601
 And ȝe him knewe / as wel as do I
 ȝe wolde wondre / how wel and thriftily
 He couthe werke / and þat in sondry wise
 He hath taken on him / many greet apprise 605
 Whiche were ful hard / for any þat is here
 To bringe aboute / but þei of him it lere
 As homely as he rit / amonges þow
 ȝif ye him knewe / it wolde be þoure prow 609
 ȝe wolde not forgoon / his aqueyntance
 ffor moche good / I dar leye in balance
 Al þat I haue / in my possession
 he is a man / of high discrecion 613
 I warne þow wel / he is a passinge man
 Wel quod oure hoost I pray þe tel me þan
 Is he clerk or noon / tel what he is
 Nay he is gretter / than a Clerk ywis 617

Seide the ȝoman / and in wordes fewe 618
 Hoost of his craft / somewhat I wol ȝow shewe
 I say my lord / can such a sotilte
 But al his craft / ȝe may not wite at me 621
 And somewhat helpe I ȝit / to his worchyng
 That al þis grounde / þat we ben on ridyng
 Til þat we come / to Cauntebury toun
 He coude al clene / turne vp so down 625
 And paue it al / of siluer and of goold
 And whan þis ȝoman / had þus y-toold
 ¶ Vn to oure hoost / he saide benedicite [leaf 173]
 This þing / is wonder. meruailous to me 629
 Sitthe þi lord / is of so high prudence
 Be cause of which / men shulde him reuerence
 That of his worshiþe / rekketh. he so lyte
 His ouer slopþe / is not worth a myte 633
 As in effecte / to him so mote I go
 It is al baudy / and to-tore also
 Why is þi lord / so sluttish I the prey
 And is of power / better cloþes for to bey 637
 ȝif þat his dede / accorde with þi speche
 Tel me that / and þat I the beseche
 ¶ Whi quod þis ȝoman / wherto aske ȝe me
 God helpe me so / for he shal neuer ythe 641
 But I wol not / avowe that I say
 And therefore kepe it secre / I yow pray
 He is to wys / in feith as I beleue
 That þat is ouerdone / it wol not preue 645
 And right as clerkes seyn / it is a vice
 Wherefore in þat / I holde him lewed and nyce
 ffor whan a man / hath ouer greet a wit
 fful ofte him happeth / to misvsen it 649
 So doth my lord / and that me greueth sore
 God it amende / I can say ȝow no more
 ¶ Ther-of no fors / goode yoman quod oure hoost
 Sitthen of the cummyng / of þi lord þou woost 653

Telle how he doth / I pray the hertely 654
 Sitthen þat he is / so crafty . and so sly3
 where dwelle 3e / 3if it tolle be
 In the subarbe / of a toun quod [he] 657
 Lurkyng in hernes / and in lanes blynde
 where thise robbers / and theefs be kynde
 Holden her priue / and ferful residence
 As þei þat dar not/ shewen her presence 661
 So fare we / 3if I shal say the sothe
 3it quod oure hoost / lat me talke to the
 Why art þou / discoloured on thy face
 Petre quod he / god 3eue it harde grace 665
 I am so vsed / in the fyre to blowe
 That it hath chaunged / my colour as I trowe [leaf 178, back]
 I am not wont in no myroure to prie
 But swynke sore / and lerne to multiplie 669
 we bloundren euere / and pouren in the fyr
 And for al þat we faylen / of oure desyr
 ffor euere we lakken / oure conclusiō
 To moche folk we be / but illusiō 673
 And borwe gold / be it a pound or two
 Or ten or twelue / or many sommes mo
 And make hem wene / atte leste weye
 That of a pound / we coude make tweye 677
 3it is it fals / and ay we han good hope
 It for to done / and after it we grope
 But þat science is / so fer vs biforn
 we may not / al þogh . we had it sworn 681
 It ouertake / it slit away so faste
 It wol vs make / beggers atte laste
 ¶ Whiles this 3oman / was þus in his talkyng
 This chanoñ drow him nere / and herde al þyng 685
 which þat pis 3oman spak / for suspeciō
 Of mennes speche / euere had this chanoñ
 ffor catoñ seith / he þat gilty is
 Demeth al þing / of him be spoke ywis 689

By cause of that / he gan so nygh to drawe 690
 his ȝoman / and herde al his sawe
 And thus he seide / vn to his ȝoma[n] tho
 Hold now thy pees / and spek wordes no mo 693
 ffor ȝif þou doost / þou shalt it de[re] abyē
 Thou sclaudrest me here / in this companye
 And eke discourerst þat þou shuðdest hyde
 ȝe quod oure hoost / tel on what so be-tyde 697
 Of al his thretenyng / recche þe nat a myte
 In feith quod he / no more I do but lyte
 And whan this chanoñ / saugh it wolde not be
 But þat his yoman / wolde telle his priuite 701
 he fledde a wey / for verray sorwe and shame
 A quod þe ȝoman / here shal rise a game
 Al þat I can / anoon wol I telle
 Syn he is goon / þe foule feend him quelle 705
 ffor neuere here after / wol I with him mete [leaf 174]
 ffor peny ne for pound / I the beheete
 he that me brouȝte / first vn-to þat game
 Er þat he deye / sorwe haue he and shame 709
 ffor it is earnest to me by my feith
 That fele I wel / what so eny man seith
 And ȝit for al my smert / and al my greef
 ffor al my sorwe / labour and mescheef 713
 I couthe neuere / leue it in no wise
 Now wolde god / my wit myght suffice
 To tellen al / that longeth to that art 716
 [But natheles ȝit wol I telle ȝou part] [Reg. 18 C ii, leaf 165]
 Syn þat my lord is goon / I wol not spare
 Swich þing as I knowe / I wol declare
 ¶ Thus endeth þe prologe/

[THE PREAMBLE.]

[on leaf 174]

and begynneth the tale

With this chanoñ / dwelled haue I .vij. ȝere
 And of his science / am I neuere þe nere
 Al þat I hadde / haue I lost ther by
 And god woot / so haue many mo þan I.
 Ther I was wont / to be right fressh and gay
 Of clothing / and of good aray 725
 Now may I were / an hose vpon myn heed
 And where my colour / was bothe fressh and reed
 Now is it wan / and of leden hewe
 who so it vse / sore shal him rewe 729
 And of my swynk ./ ȝit blered is myn ye
 Lo which auauntage / it is to multiplie
 That slidyng science / hath me maad so bare
 That I haue no good / where þat euere I fare 733
 And ȝit I am / endetted so ther by
 Of gold / þat I haue borwed trewely
 That while I lyue / I shal it quite neuere
 Lat euery man / be war by me . for euere 737
 What maner man / that casteth him ther to
 ȝif he contynue / I holde his thрифte ydo
 ffor so helpe me god / þer-by shal he not wyne
 But empte his purs / and make his wittes thynne 741
 And whan he / purgh his madnesse and folie
 hath lost his owne good / purgh Iupartie
 Than he exciteth / other men ther-to
 To lese her good / as him self hath do [leaf 174, back] 745
 ffor vn-to shrewes / ioie it is and ese
 To haue her felawes / in peyne and disese

Thus was I ones/ lerned of a clerk^t
 Of þat no charge / I wol speke of oure werk^t 749
 ¶ Whan we be þere / as we shul exercise
 Oure eluyssh craft^t / we seme wonder wise
 Oure termes be / so clergeal and so queynte
 I blowe þe fire / til þat myn herte feynte 753
 what shulde I telle / eche proporcioñ
 Of thinges whiche / þat we worchen on
 As of fyve or sixe vneces / it may wel be
 Of siluer / or of som oþer quantite 757
 And besie me / to telle ȝow the names
 Of orpement^t/ brent^t bones . yren squames
 That in to poudre / grounde be ful smal
 And in an erthen pot / how it put is al 761
 And salt yput in / and also papire
 Bifore thise pouders / that I speke of here
 And wel y-couered / with a lampe of glas
 And of moche other thing / what^t that ther was 765
 And of the pot/ and glas englutynge^t
 That of the eyre / myght^t passe no thyng^t
 And of the esy fire / and smart also
 Whiche þat were made / and of the care and wo 769
 That we had / in oure maters sublymynge
 And amalgamyng / and calcenyng
 Of quic siluer / y-cleped mercurie crude
 ffor alle oure sleighthes/ we can not^t conclude 773
 Oure orpement^t / and sublymed^t mercurie
 Oure grounde litarge / eke on the porphirie
 Of eche of þise / of vneces a certayn
 Not helpeth vs / oure labour is in vayñ 777
 Ne eke oure spirites / ascensiozn
 Ne eke oure mater / that lyn al fixe adoun
 May in oure werching / no thing vs avayle
 ffor lost is al oure labour / and trauayle 781
 And al the cost/ on twenty deuel way
 Is lost also / which we vpon it lay

Ther is also / many another thing [leaf 175]
 That is to oure craft / apertenynge 785
 Though I by ordre hem here / ne reherse can
 Be cause that I am / a lewed man
 3it wol I telle hem / as þei come to mynde
 Though I ne can / sette hem in her kynde 789
 As boole amoniak / verdegres boras
 And sondry vesselles / made of erthe and glas
 Oure vrinals / and oure descensories
 Violes crescellettes / and sublymatories 793
 Concurbites / and alembikes eke
 And othere / dere ynogh a leke
 Not nedeth it / to rehersen hem alle
 Watres rubifynge / and boles galle 797
 Arsenyk^t. sal armoniak^t. / and brymston
 And herbes / coude I telle eek manyon
 As egremoyne / valerian and lunarie
 And other suche / 3if þat me lust tarie 801
 Oure lampes brennynge / bothe nyght and day
 To bringe aboute / oure craft 3if þat we may
 Oure fourneis eke / of calcinacioñ
 And of oure watres / albificacioñ 805
 Vnslekke lyme / chalk. and gleyre of an ey
 Poudres diuerse / assches dong pisse and cley
 Cered pokettes / sal petre and vitriole
 And diuerse fires / made of wode and cole 809
 Sal tartre / alcaly and salt preparat
 And combust^t materes and coagulat^t
 Cley made with horses. or mannes heer and oyle
 Of tartre / alumglas. berme wort and argoyle 813
 Reysalgar / and othere materes enbibynge
 And eke of oure materes / encorporinge
 And of oure siluer / citrinacioñ
 Oure fermenting^t and fermentacioñ 817
 Oure Ingottes / testes and many mo
 I wol 3ow telle / as was me tau3t also

The foure spirites / and the bodies seuene
 By ordre as I haue herd / my lord neuene 821
 The first spirit^t / quik siluer called is [leaf 175, back]
 The secunde orpement / the thridde ywis
 Sal armoniak / and the fourthe brymston
 The bodies seuene / eek loo hem here anoon 825
 Sol gold is / and luna siluer we threpe
 Mars yren / Mecurie quik siluer we clepe
 Saturnus leed / a[nd] Iupiter is tyn
 And venus copir / by my fader kyn 829
 This cursed craft / who so wol excercise
 He shal no good han / that may suffise
 ffor al the good / he spendeth ther aboute
 he lese shal / ther-of haue I no doute 833
 Who so that lust / to outen his folie
 lat him come forth / and lerne multiplie
 And every man / þat hath auzt in his cofre
 lat him appere / and wexe a philosophre 837
 Ascaunce that craft / is so light to lere
 Nay nay god woot / al be he monk or frere
 Preest or chanoñ / or eny other wight
 Though he sitte at his booke / bope day and nyght 841
 In lernyng of this eluissñ nyce lore
 As is in veyne / and parde moche more
 Is to lerne a lewed man / this sotilte
 ffy spek not þer-of / for it wol not^t be 845
 Al coude he lettrure / or coude he noon
 As in effecte / he shal fynde it^t al oon
 ffor bothe two / by my saluacioñ
 Concluden in multiplicacioñ 849
 yliche wel / whan þei han al ydo
 This is to say / þe fayle bothe two
 3it forȝat I to moche rehersaille
 Of watres corosif / and of lymaille 853
 And of bodies / mollificacioñ
 And also / of her induracioñ

Oyles ablucion / and metal fusible
 To tellen al / wolde passen eny bible 857
 That ougher is / werfore . as for the beste
 Of alle þise names / now wol I me reste
 ffor as I trowe / I haue ȝow told ynogh
 To reisen a feend / loke he neuere so rogh [leaf 176] 861
 A nay lat be / thy philosophres stoon
 Elixir cleped we / sechen faste echoon
 ffor had we him / than were we siker ynow
 But vn-to god / of heuene I make a vow 865
 ffor al oure craft / whan we haue al y-do
 And al oure sleighte / he wol not come vs to
 he hath vs made / spende moche good
 ffor sorwe of which / almost wexe wood 869
 But that good hope / crepeth in oure herte
 Supposinge euere / thogh we sore smerte
 To be releued / by him afterward
 Supposing and hope / is sharp and hard 873
 I warne ȝow wel / it is to seken euere
 That future temps / hath made men disseuere
 In trust ther of / from al þat euere þei hadde
 ȝit of that art / þei coude not wexe sadde 877
 ffor vn to hem / it is a bitter swete
 So semeth it / for ne had þei but a shete
 which þei myghte / wrappe hem in a nyght
 And a bak to walken in / by day light 881
 They wolde hem selle / and spenden on the craft
 They can not stinte / til no thing be laft
 And euere more / where þat euere þei goon
 Men may hem knowe / by smel of brimstoon 885
 ffor al the world / þei stynken as a goot
 he[r] sauour is / so rammyssh and so hoot
 That though a man / from hem a myle be
 The sauour wol infecten him trusteth me 889
 Loo þus bi smellyng / and thred bare aray
 ȝif that men liste / this folk þei knowe may

And ȝif a man / wol aske hem priuely
 Why þei be clothed / so vntriftily 893
 Right anon þei wol / rownen in his ere
 And sey / ȝif þei aspied were
 Men wolde hem sleen / bicause of her science
 Loo thus þis folk / betrayen innocence 897
 Passe ouer þis / I go my tale vn to
 Er þat þe pot / be on þe fire ydo
 Of metalles / with a certeyn quantite 900
 My lord hem tempreth / and no man but he [leaf 176, back]
 Now he is gon / I dar say boldely
 ffor as men sayn / he can do craftily
 Algate I woot wel / he hath such a name
 And ȝit ful ofte / he renneth in the blame 905
 And wete how / ful ofte it happeth so
 The pot to-breketh / and farewel al is go
 Thise metals ben / of so greet violence
 Oure walles may not / make hem resistance 909
 Bu[t] ȝif they be wrouȝt / of lyme and stoon
 They percen so / and thurgh the wal þei goon
 And somme of hem / sinken in to the grounde
 Thus haue we lost / be tymes many a pounde 913
 And somme are scatered / al the floor aboute
 Somme lepen in to þe roof / withoute doute
 Though that þe feend / nat in oure sight him shewe
 I trowe þat he / be with vs. þat shrewe 917
 In helle wher he is / lord and sire
 Ne is ther no more wo / ne anger ne ire
 ¶ Whan that oure pot is broken / as I haue sayd
 Euery men chit / and halt him euele payd 921
 Somme seide it was long on the fire makyng
 Somme seide nay / it was long on the blowyng
 Than was I ferd / for þat was myn office
 Strawe quod the thride / ȝe be lewed and nyce 925
 It was not tempred / as it ouȝt be
 Nay quod the ferthe / stinte and herkene me

By cause oure fire / was not made of beech
 That is the cause / noon other so theech 929
 I can not telle / wher on it is along
 But wel I woot / greet' strif is vs among
 What quod my lord / ther is no more to done
 Of thise periles / I wol be war eft sone 933
 I am right siker / þat the pot was crased
 Be as be may / be ȝe no thing amazed
 As vsage is / lat swepe the floor as swithe
 Plucke vp ȝowre herte / and be ȝe glad and blithe 937
 The mollok on an heep / yswopen is
 And on the flore / cast a canevas
 And al this mollok / in sive ythrowe [leaf 177]
 And sifted and y-plucked / many a throwe 941
 Parde quod oon / somewhat' of oure metaþ
 Yit is ther here / þogh we haue not' aþ
 And thogh this thing / mishapped hath now
 Anoper tyme / it may be wel ynow 945
 Vs muste putte / oure good in auenture
 A marchant parde / may nat ay endure :
 Trusteth me wel / in his prosperite
 Somtyme his good / is drowned in þe see 949
 And somtyme cometh it sauf / vn-to the londe
 Pees quod my lord / þe nexte tyme I wol fonde
 To bringe oure craft / al in another plyte
 And but I do sires / lat me haue the wyte 953
 Ther was defaute / in somewhat' wel I woot
 And othere seide / the fire was ouerhoot'
 But be it hoot or coold' / I dar wel say this
 That we conclude / eueremore amis 957
 We failen of that / which we wolde haue
 And in oure madnesse / eueremore we raue
 And whan we been / to-geder euerychon
 Euery man semeth / as wys as salomon 961
 But al thing' / which þat semeth golde
 Is nat' gold / as I haue herd tolde

Ne euery appel / that is fayre at eye	
Ne is not good / what so men clappe or seye	965
Right so loo fareth it / amonges vs	
He that semeth / the wisest by Ihesus	
Is moost fool / whan it cometh to the preef	
And he that semeth trewest / is þe moste þeef	969
That shuH ye knowe / er þat I fro yow wende	
By that I of my tale / haue made an ende	

[*No break in the MS.*]

[THE TALE.]

Ther is a Chanoñ / of Religioun
 Amonges vs / wolde enfecte al a touñ 973
 Thogh it as greet ware / as was Niniue
 Rome Alisaundre / Troye and other thre
 His sleighes / and his infinite falsnesse
 Ther cowthe no man / writen as I gesse 977
 Thogh that he myghte / lyven a þousand yeer
 In al this world / of falsnesse nis his peer [leaf 177, back]
 ffor in his termes / he wol him so wynde
 And speke his wordes / in so sligh a kynde 981
 Whan he commune shal / with eny wight
 What. he wol make him / dote anon right
 But it the feend be / as him self is
 fful many a man / hath he begiled er this 985
 And wole ȝif that he may / lyuen a while
 And ȝit men riden / and goon ful many a myle
 Him for to seke / and haue aqueyntance
 Nought knowynge / of his fals gouernance 989
 And ȝif ȝe lust / to ȝeue me audience
 I wol it telle / here in ȝoure presence
 But worschipeful Chanoñ / Religious
 Ne demeth not / þat I sclaunder ȝoure hous 993
 Al thogh my tale / of a chanoñ be
 Of euery ordre / som shrewe is parde
 And god forbede / that al a companye
 Shulde rewe / a singuler mannes folie 997
 To sclaunder ȝow / is not myn entent
 But to correcten / þat is wis ywent

This tale was not oonly / told for 3ow
 But eke for other mo / 3e woot wel how 1001
 That amonges / cristes aposteles twelue
 Ther was no traitour / but Iudas him selue
 Than why sholde þe remenant / alle haue blame
 That gilteles were / by 3ow sey I the same 1005
 Sauþ only this / 3if 3e wole herkne me
 3if any Iudas / in 3oure couent be
 Remeweth him by tyme / I 3ow rede
 3if shame or losse / may causen any drede 1009
 And beth no þing displesed / I 3ow pray
 But in this caas / herkeneth what I say
 IN london was a preest / an aunueler
 That þerynne dwelled / had many a 3eer 1013
 which was so plesant / and so seruisable
 Vn to the wyf / where he was at table
 That she wolde suffre him / no þing for to paie
 ffor bord^r noþer clothing^r wente he neuere so gaye 1017
 And spending^r siluer / hadde he right ynow³ [leaf 178]
 Ther-of no force / I wol procede as now
 And telle forth my tale / of the Chanoñ
 That broghte þis preest / to confusioñ 1021
 ¶ This false Chanoñ / com vpon a day
 Vn-to the prestes chambre / there he lay
 Besechinge him / to lene him a certeyn
 Of gold / and he wolde . quit him a-geyn 1025
 Leneth me a marc / quod he but dayes thre
 And at my day / I wol it quite the
 And 3if so be / þou fynde me fals
 Another day / hange me by the hals 1029
 This prest him toke / a marc & þat as swithe
 And this Chanoñ / him thanked ofte sithe
 And toke his leue / and wente forth his weye
 And atte thridde day / brou3te his moneye 1033
 And to the preest / he took þis gold ageyn
 Ther-of þis preest / was glad and fayn

Certes quod he / no þing anyeth me
 To lene a man a noble / or two or þre 1037
 Or what thing were / in my possession
 whan he so trewe is / of condicioñ
 That in no wise / he breke wol his day
 To swich a man / I can neuere say nay 1041
 What quod þis Chanoñ / shulde I be vntrewe
 Nay that were þing / fallen al of newe
 Truthe is a thing / that I wol euere kepe
 Vn to the day / in which þat I shal crepe 1045
 In to my graue / and ellis god forbede
 Beleeueth þis / as siker as the crede
 God thanke I / and in good tyme be it sayd
 That ther was neuere man 3it euel appayd 1049
 ffor gold ne siluer / that he to me lente
 Ne neuere falshede / in myn herte I mente
 And sire quod he / now of my priuite
 Syn 3e so goodly / haue ben to me 1053
 And kythed to me / so gret gentilnesse
 Somwhat to quiten with / 3oure kyndenesse
 I wol 3ow shewe / and 3if 3ow lust to lere [leaf 178, back]
 I shal it shewe / to 3ow anon right here 1057
 How I can worchen / in philosophie
 Taketh good heede / 3e schul wel seen at y3e
 That I wol done / a maystrie or I goo
 3ee quod the preest / 3ee sire and wol 3e so 1061
 Marie ther of / I pray 3ow hertely
 At 3oure commaundement / sire trewely
 Quod the Chanoñ / and ellis god forbede
 Loo how þis thief / couthe his seruice bede 1065
 fful soth it is / þat such profred seruice
 Stinketh / as witnessen thise olde wise
 And that ful sone / I wol it verifie
 In this Chanoñ that is / roote of al treccherie 1069
 That euere more / delite hath and gladnesse
 Suche feendly thouztes / in his herte empresse

How cristes peple / he may to mescheef bringe
 God kepe vs / from his fals dissimulinge 1073
 What wiste this preest / with whom þat he delte
 Ne of his harme comynge / no thing he felte
 O sely preest / o sely Innocent
 With couetise anoon / þou shalt be blent 1077
 O graceles / ful blynd is þi conceyt
 No þing artow war / of the deceyt
 Which that þis fox / shapen hath to the
 His wily wrenches / þou mayst not flee 1081
 Wherefore to go / to the conclusiō
 That referreth / to þi confusiō
 Vnhappy man / anoon I wol me hie
 To telle thyn vnwitte / and þi folie 1085
 And eke the falsnes / of þat other wrecche
 As ferforth / as my connyng wol stretche
 This Chanoñ was my lord / 3e wolde wene
 Sire ofte in feith / and by the heuene quene 1089
 It was a nother Chanoñ / and nouȝt he
 That can an hundred fold more sotiltee
 He hath betrayed folc many tyme
 Of his falsnesse / it dulleth me to Ryme 1093
 Euere whan I speke of his falshede
 ffor shame of him / my chekes wexe rede
 Algates þei begonne / for to glowe [leaf 179]
 ffor reednesse haue I now / right wel y-knowe 1097
 In my visage / for fumes diuerse
 Of metalles whiche / 3e han herd me reherse
 Consumed and wasted / han my reednesse
 Now take heede of this / Chanons cursednesse 1101
 ¶ Sire quod he to the preest / lat ȝoure man goon
 ffor quicsiluer / that we it hadde anoon
 And lat him bringe / vneces two or three
 And whan he cometh / as faste shuȝ 3e see 1105
 A wonder þing / which 3e say neuere ar this
 Sire quod the preest / it shal be done ywis

He bad his seruaut / fecchen him þis þing^t
 And he al redy / was at his bidding 1109
 And wente him forth / and com anoon ageyn
 with this quicsiluer / shortly for to seyn
 And toke thise vnces thre / to the Chanoun
 And he it leide / fayre and wel adoun 1113
 And bad the seruau^{nt} / coles for to bringe
 That he anoon / myghte go to his worchinge
 The coles right^t anoon / were yfette
 And this Chanoñ / toke out a crosselette 1117
 Of his bosome / and shewed it the preest
 This Instrument quod he / which þat þou seest
 Tak in thin hond / and put þi self þerynne
 Of þis quic siluer an vnce / and here begynne 1121
 In the name of crist^t to wexe a philosop^hre
 Ther ben ful fewe / whiche þat I wolde profre
 To shewe hem thus moche / of my science
 ffor 3e shu^h see / here by experience 1125
 That þis quicsiluer / I wol mortefie
 Right in 3oure sight / anon withoute lie
 And make it as good siluer / and as fyn
 As ther is eny in 3oure purs / or in myn 1129
 Or elliswhere / and make it^t malleable
 And ellis hold me / fals and vnable
 Amonges folc / euere to appere
 I haue a powder here / þat coste me dere 1133
 Shal make al gold / for it is cause of a^h
 My cunnyng^e / which that I 3ow shewe sha^h [leaf 179, back]
 Voydeth 3oure man / and lat him be þer oute
 And shitte the dore / whiles we ben aboute 1137
 Oure priuete / that no man // vs espie
 'whiles we werken / in this philosophie¹ [1—1 over an erasure]
 Al as he bad / fulfilled was in dede
 This ilke seruau^{nt} / anoon right^t out 3ede 1141
 And his mayster / shette the dore anoon
 And to her labour / speedly they goon

This preest/ at this cursed chanoñs bidding
 Vpon the fire / anoon sette this thyng 1145
 And blewe þe fire / and besied him ful faste
 And þis chanoñ / in to the crosselet caste
 A powder not I wher of / that it was
 Ymade / outhur of chalk / or of glas 1149
 Or somewhat ellis / was not worth a flie
 To blynde with þis preest / and bad him hie
 The coles for to cowche / al aboue
 The crosselet / for in tokene that I the loue 1153
 Quod this Chanoñ / thyn hondes two
 Shuþ werke al þinge / which as shaþ be do
 Grauntmercy quod the preest / and was ful glad
 And couched coles / as the Chanoñ bad 1157
 And whiles he besy was / þis feendly wrecche
 This fals Chanoñ / þe foule feend him fecche
 Out of his bosome / took a bechen cole
 In which ful sotilly / was maad an hole 1161
 And ther Inne put was / of siluer lymayle
 An ounce / and stopped was withoute fayle
 This hole with wex / to kepe the lymayle in
 And vnderstondeth / þat þis false gin 1165
 Was not maad there/. but it was maad bifore
 And opere thinges / as I shaþ telle more
 Here afterward / which þat he with him brouzte
 Ar he com there / to begile him he thouzte 1169
 And so dide / or þey wente a twynne
 Til he had torned him / coude he not blynne
 It dulleth me / whan þat I of him speke
 On his falshede I fayn wolde me awreke 1173
 3if I wiste how / but he is here and there [leaf 180]
 He is so variant / he abideth nowhere
 But taketh heede / now sires for goddes loue
 He toke his cole / of which I spak aboue 1177
 And in his hond / he bar it priuely
 And whiles þe preest/ couched besily

The coles / as I tolde 3ow er this
 This chanoñ seide / freend 3e done amis 1181
 This is not couched / as it ouȝte be
 But sone I shal / amenden it quod he
 Now lat me medle with it / but a while
 ffor of 3ow haue I pite / by seint Gile 1185
 3e be right hoot / .I see wel how 3e swete
 haue here a cloth / and wype a-wey the wete
 And whiles þe preest / him wyped haas
 This Chanoñ toke his cole / I shrewe his faas 1189
 And leyde it vpon / aboue the midward
 Of the crosselet / and blewe wel afterward
 Til that the coles / gonne faste brenne
 Now 3eue vs drynke / quod the Chanoñ thenne 1193
 As swithe / al shal be wel I vndertake
 Sitte we down / and lat vs mery make
 And whan the Chanons / bechen cole
 was brent / al þe lymayle out at þe hole 1197
 In to the crosselet / anoon fil adoun
 And so it muste / nedes by resoun
 Syn it so euene / aboue couched was
 But ther-of wiste / no þing þe preest allas 1201
 He demede alle the coles lyche goode
 ffor of the sleighte / no þing he vnderstoode
 And whan þis Alkamystre / sagh his tyme
 Riseth vp sire prest / and stondest by me 1205
 And for I woot wel / Ingot haue 3e noon
 Goth walketh forth / and bring a chalk stoon
 ffor I wol make it / of the same shappe
 That is an Ingot / 3if I may haue happe 1209
 And bringe with 3ow / a bolle or a panne
 fful of water / and see shuH 3e thanne
 How þat oure besynesse / shal happe & preue
 And 3it for 3e shul haue / no misbilleue [leaf 180, back] 1213
 Ne wrong conceyt of me / in 3oure absence
 I wol not ben / out of 3oure presence

But go with 3ow / and come with 3ow a-geyn
 The chambre dore / shortly for to seyn 1217
 They opened and shette / and wente forth her weye
 And forth with hem / þei caried the keye
 And comen ageyn / withoute eny delay
 What sholde I tarie / al þe longe day 1221
 He took þe chalk / and shoop it' in the wise
 Of an Ingot' / as .I shal 3ow devise
 I say he took out / of his owne sleue
 A teyne of siluer / euele mote he cheue 1225
 which þat was / but' an ounce of weighte
 And taketh heede now / of þis cursed sleighte
 he shoop his Ingot / in lengthe and brede
 Of the teyne / withoute eny drede 1229
 So slihtly / þat þe prest it not espide
 And [in] his sleue / ageyn he gan it hide
 And from þe fire / took vp þe matere
 And in to the Ingot' / it putte with mery chere 1233
 And in to the water vessel he it caste
 whan þat him liste / and bad the preest as faste
 loke what there is / put in thyn hand and grope
 Thou shalt fynde there / siluer as I hope 1237
 what deuel of helle / shulde it ellis be
 Shauyng of siluer / siluer is parde
 he putte in his hond / and toke vp a teyne
 Of siluer fyn / and glad euery veyne 1241
 [glad] was þis preest / whan he sagh it was so
 Goddes blessing / and his modres also
 And alle halwes / haue 3e sire Chanoñ
 Seide the preest / and I her malisoñ 1245
 But' and 3e vouchesauf / to teche me
 This noble craft' / and þis sotilte
 I wol be 3oure in al þat euere I may
 Quod the Chanoñ / 3it wol I make assay 1249
 The secounde tyme / that 3e may take hede
 And ben expert of this / and in 3oure nede

Another day / in myn absence [leaf 181]
 This discipline / and þis crafty science 1253
 ¶ Lat take anoþer ounce quod he tho
 Of quik siluer / withoute wordes mo
 And do therwith / as 3e haue done er þis
 With þat other / þat now siluer is 1257
 This preest him besieth / in al þat he can
 To done as þis Chanoñ / þis cursed man
 Commaundeth him / an faste blew þe fire
 ffor to come to the effecte / of his desire 1261
 And this chanoñ / right in þe mene while
 Al redy was / þis preest eft to begile
 And for a countenance / in his hond he bar
 An holgh stikke / take hede and be war 1265
 In þe ende of which / an ounce and no more
 Of siluer lymayle / put was al bfore
 As was his cole / and stopped with wax wel
 ffor to kepe in / his lymayle euerydeel 1269
 And whiles þis preest / was in his besynesse
 This Chanoñ with his stikke / gan him dresse
 To him anoon . and his pouder cast In
 As he dide er / þe deucl out of his skyn 1273
 him torne / I pray to god / for his falshede
 ffor he was euere fals / in word and dede
 And with his stikke / aboue þe crosse[le]tte
 That was ordeined / with þat false gette 1277
 He stereth the coles / til relente gan
 The wax a-geyn the fire / as euery man
 But it a fool be / woot wel and moot nede
 And al that in the hole was / out 3ede 1281
 And in to the crosselet / hastely it fel
 The preest supposed / no þing but wel
 But besied him faste / and was wonder fayn
 Supposinge noght but trouthe / sothe for to sayn 1285
 He was so glad / I can it not expresse
 In no manere / his merthe and his gladnesse

And to the Chanoñ / he profred eft sone
 Body and good / 3e quod the Chanoñ sone 1289
 Thogh pouere I be / crafty þou shalt me fynde
 I warne the / 3it^t is ther more behynde [leaf 181, back]
 Is ther ony copor / here-ynne seide he
 3e sire quod the preest / I trowe ther be 1293
 Ellis go bye som / and þat asswithe
 Now sire go forth þi way / and hythe
 He-wente his way / and with þis copor he cam
 And this chanoñ / in hand it nam 1297
 And of þat copor / weyed out but an ounce
 Al to symple is my tunge / to pronounce
 his monstre / and his witte . þe doublenesse
 Of this chanoñ / rote of cursednesse 1301
 He semede freendly / to hem that knewe him noght
 But he was feendly / bothe in werk and thoght
 It^t werieth me to telle / of his falsnesse
 And natheles / 3it wole I it^t expresse 1305
 To that^t entente / þat men may be war þer by
 And for noon other cause trewely
 He putte this ounce of copor / in þe crosselet
 And on the fire / asswithe he hath it set 1309
 And caste in pouder / and made þe preest to blowe
 And in his worching / for to stoupe lowe
 As he dide erst / and al was but^t a iape
 Right^t as him liste / þe preest he made his ape 1313
 And afterward / in to the Ingot he it caste
 And in the panne / putte it atte laste
 Of water / and in he putte his owne hand
 And in his sleue / as 3e bifore hand 1317
 herde me telle / he had a siluer teyne
 he slyghtly toke it^t out / þis cursed heyne
 Vnwetinge þis preest^t of his false craft
 And in the pannes botme / he hath it^t laft 1321
 And in the water / rombleth to and fro
 And wonder priuely / took it vp also

The copre teyne / not knowynge þis preest
 And hidde it / and hente him by the breest 1325
 And to him spak / and thus seide in his game
 Stoupeth a down / by god 3e be to blame
 helpeth me now / as I dide 3ow whiler
 Put in 3oure hand / and loketh what is ther 1329
 This preest took vp / þis siluer teyne anoon [leaf 182]
 And þan seide the chanoñ / lat ys goon
 And thise thre teynes / whiche as we haue wroght
 To som goldsmyth / to wete 3if it be ouȝt 1333
 ffor by my faith / I nolde for myn hood
 But 3if þei were siluer fyn and good
 And þat asswithe / preued shaþ it be 1336
 [Vnto þe goldsmyth with þise teynes þree
 They wente and pitte þise teynes in assay
 To fyr and hamer myȝte no man sey nay
 But þei were as hem oghte be]
 This sottid preest / who was gladder þan he 1341
 Was neuere brid / gladder ageyn the day
 Ne nightyngale / in þe sesoñ of May
 Was neuere noon / that liste better synge
 Ne lady lustyer / in carolynges 1345
 And for to speke of Loue / and womanhede
 Ne knyght in armes / to done an hardy dede
 To stonde in grace / of his lady dere
 Than hadde þis preest / þis craft for to lere 1349
 And to þe Chanoñ / þus he spak and seide
 ffor þe loue of god / þat for vs alle deyde
 And as I may / deserue it vn-to 3ow
 What shal þis Receyt coste / telleth now 1353
 By oure lady quod the Chanoñ / it is dere
 I warne 3ow forsothe / sauf I and a frere
 In Engelond / ther can no man it make
 No fors quod he / now sire for goddes sake 1357
 What shal I paye / telle me I þe pray
 ywis quod he / it is ful dere I say

Sire at' oo word' / 3if þat 3e lest it haue
 3e shult' paie fourty pound / so god me saue 1361
 And ne were the frendshipe / þat 3e dide er this
 To me / 3e shulde paie more ywis
 This preest þe somme / of fourty pound anoon
 Of nobles fette / and toke hem euerychoon 1365
 To þis Chanoñ / for this ilke receyt
 Al his worching' was fraude and deceyt
 Sire preest he seide / I kepe to haue no loos
 Of my craft' / for I wolde it were kept cloos 1369
 And as 3e loue me / kepeth it secree
 ffor and men knewe / al my sotilte
 By god men wolde haue so greet envie
 To me by cause / of my philosophie [leaf 182, back] 1373
 I shulde be ded / ther were noon oþer weye
 God forbede quod þe preest/ what sey3e
 3it had I leuere spenden al the good
 which þat I haue / and elles wexe I wood 1377
 Than þat' 3e shulde / falle in such meschief
 ffor 3oure good wil / sire haue 3e right good preef
 Quod the Chanoñ / and sire fare wel graunt mercy
 He wente his way / and neuere þe preest him sey 1381
 After þat day / and whan þis preest sholde
 Maken assay / at such tyme as he wolde
 Of þis Receyt/ fare wel it wolde not be
 Loo þus byiaped / and bygiled was he 1385
 ¶ Thus maketh he / his introduction
 To bringe folk / to her destruction
 Considereth sires / how þat in eche astate
 Betwixe men and gold ther is debate 1389
 So ferforth / þat vnnethes is þer oon
 This multiplying/ blendeth so many oon
 That in good feith / I trowe þat it be
 The cause grettest / of þis grete scarste 1393
 Thise philosophres / speken so mistily
 In þis craft / þat men can not come þerby

ffor eny witte / þat men haue now a dayes
 They may wel chitren / and ianglen as done iayes 1397
 And in her termes / sette lust and peyne
 But to her purpos / shul thei neuere atteyne
 A man may lightly lerne / 3if he haue oght
 To multiplie / and bringe his good to noght 1401
 Loo such a lucre / is in þis lusty game
 A mannes merthe / it wol torne al to grame
 And empten also / grete and heuy purses
 And make folk / to purchace curses 1405
 Of hem þat han þer to / her good ylent
 O fy for shame / þei þat haue be brent
 Allas can þei not flee / þe fires hete
 3e þat it vsen / I rede that 3e lete 1409
 Lest 3e lesen al / for bet þan neuere is late
 Neuere to thryue / were to long a date
 Thogh 3e prolle ay / 3e shuþ it neuere fynde [leaf 183]
 3e ben as bolde / as is bayard the blynde 1413
 That blundreth forth / and perile casteth he noon
 he is as bold / to renne ageyn a stoon
 As for to go besides / in the weye
 So fare 3e / þat multiplie I seye 1417
 3if þat oure eyen / can not seen a-right
 Loke þat 3oure mynde / lakke noght his sight
 ffor thogh 3e loke / neuere so brode and stare
 3e shuþ not wyne / a myte in þat chaffare 1421
 But wasten al / þat 3e may rappe and renne
 Withdrawe the fire / lest it to faste brenne
 Medleth no more / with þat art I mene
 ffor 3if 3e done / 3oure thrifte is goon ful clene 1425
 And as swithe / I wol 3ow telle here
 what þat the philosophres / seyn in þis matere
 Loo thus seith Arnold / of the newe toun
 As his Rosarie / maketh mencioun 1429
 He seith right thus / without eny lye
 Ther may no man / mercurie mortifie

But it be with / his brotheres knowelechyng
 How þat he / which first seide this thyng 1433
 Of philosophres / fader was hermes
 He seith how þat / the dragoñ douteles
 Ne dyeth not / but 3if he be slayn
 With his brother / and þat is for to sayn 1437
 By the dragoñ / mercurie and noon other
 He vnderstood / þat bremston were his brother
 That out of sol / and luna were y-drawe
 And þerfore seide he / take hede to my sawe 1441
 lat no man besie him / this art for to seche
 But he / that the entencioñ and speche
 Of philosophres / vnderstonde can
 And 3if he do / he is a lewed man 1445
 ffor þis science / and þis cunnyng quod he
 Is of þe secre / of secrees parde
 Also þer was a disciple of plato
 That on a tyme / saide his maister to 1449
 As his book sonier / wol bere witnesse
 And this was his demande / in sothfastnesse [leaf 163, back]
 Tel me the name / of the priue stoon
 And plato answerde / vn to him anoon 1453
 Tak the stoon / that titanos men name
 which is þat quod he / Magnesia is þe same
 His disciple seide / 3e sire and is it thus
 This is ignotum / per ignotius 1457
 What is magnesia / good sire I pray
 It is a water / that is mad I say
 Of elementes foure / quod plato
 Tel me the Roche / goode sire quod he tho 1461
 Of that water / 3if it be 3oure wille
 Nay nay quod plato / certeyn þat I nylle
 The philosophres / were sworn ecchon
 That þei shulde discouere it / to no mon 1465
 Ne in no book / it write in no manere
 ffor vn to god / it was so leef and dere

That he wol not / þat it discouered be
 But where it liketh / to his deyte 1469
 Man to enspire / and eke for to defende
 whom that him liketh / loo þis is þe ende
 ¶ Than conclude I thus / syn þat god of heuene
 wol not / that the philosophres nevene 1473
 how that a man / shal come vn to þis stoon
 I rede as for the beste / lat it goon
 ffor who so maketh god his aduersarie
 And for to worche eny thing in contrarie 1477
 Vn to his wil: certes neuere shal he thryve
 Thogh þat he multiplie / terme of his lyve
 And there a poynt for ended is my tale
 God sende euery trewe man bote of his bale 1481

Prologus

¶ Thus endeth the tale of the Chanons yoman /]

[Lichfield extract ends]

DRAWINGS OF THE 23 TELLERS

OF THE

24 CANTERBURY TALES,

COPIED FROM THE ELLESMERE MS,

AND CUT ON WOOD,

BY

Mr W. H. Hooper.



In this first issue, 1871, only 14 of the Cuts are given. The other 10 will follow in 1872. When the print of each MS is bound, the cut of each Teller of a Tale can be put at the beginning of his Tale, as in the Ellesmere MS, or by his description in the General Prologue, to contrast the artist's hand with the poet's; or, all the cuts can be put together before or after the Prologue, or at the end of the volume (as not part of the MS), according to the fancy of each Member.



THE MILLERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 38, back.

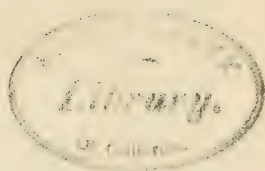




THE KNYGHT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 14.

(The brand on the horse's hip—M, ? for *Miles*—
is in ink, and probably by a later hand.)





THE COOK.

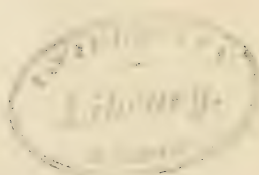
Ellesmere MS, leaf 51.





THE REVE.

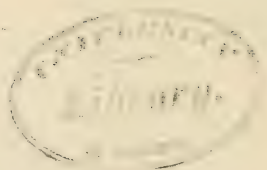
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THE WYF OF BATHE.

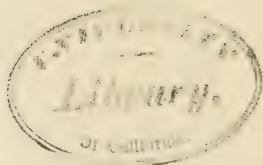
Ellesmere MS, leaf 76.





THE MAN OF LAWE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 54, back.





THE FRERE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 80, back.



THE SOMONOUR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 85, back.





THE CLERK OF OXFORD.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 92.





THE SHIPMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 147, back.





THE PRIORESSE.

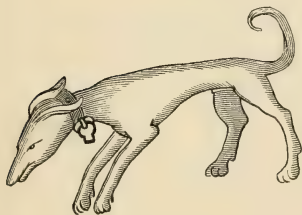
Ellesmere MS, leaf 152, back.



CHAU CER.

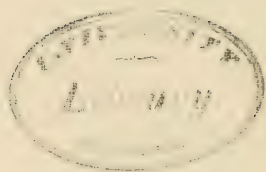
Ellesmere MS, leaf 157, back.





THE MONK.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 173.





THE NONNES PREEST.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 183.





THE MERCHANT.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 106, back.



THE SQUIRE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 119, back.





THE FRANKLIN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 127, back.





THE DOCTOR.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 137.





THE PARDONER.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 142.



THE SECOND NUN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 191.



THE CANON'S YEOMAN.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 198.



THE MANCIPLE.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 207.





THE PARSON.

Ellesmere MS, leaf 210, back.

[These coloured figures in the Ellesmere MS have evidently been drawn by two different persons. The little pieces of ground on which the later hand places his figures, mark those done by him.]

His drawing is not so good as the first hand's; and his colours are badly ground, and of poor quality.—W. H. HOOPER.]



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